A

Looking-Glaſs

FOR

SAINTS and SINNERS;

OR,

An Expoſition on the ſecond Epiſtle of Saint JOHN.

A moſt needfull Treatiſe for theſe Apoſtatizing times wherein we live, fit to be read, but practiſed by all Chriſtians.

By *Samuel Smith* Miniſter of the Goſpel, and Author of *Davids Repentance*, and the *Great Aſſize*, &c.

Gal. 6. 9.

Let us not therefore be weary of Well-doing: for, in due ſeaſon we ſhall reap, if we faint not.

LONDON,
Printed by *W. W.* for *Nathaniel Brookes* at the *Angel* in *Cornhill*. 1663.

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An Exposition on the second Epistle of Saint JOHN.

A [illegible] Treatise for these Apostatizing [illegible] wherein we live, fit to be read, but practised by all Christians.

By [illegible] Minister of the Gospel, and [illegible] of [illegible], &c.

Gal. 6. 9.

[illegible]

LONDON,

Printed by W. W. for Nathaniel Brooks at the Angel in Cornhill. 1666.

To my Reverend Friend the Author.

SIR,

IF Books (the issues of the mind) like Children be,
To shew the Parent to Posterity,
Then you (though Childless otherwise) shall live, and shew
Fruitfull in Children, pretious to the view
Of all succeeding ages, and the holy men
That know the worth and price of things Divine
Shall love, and praise the Reverend Author and his Pen,
That holy Text, and Truth, thus make to shine;
You have been plentifull, and painfull in your works,
A powerfull Preacher, and a Writer both,
Discovering sin, all sin! which in mans nature lurks,
A pattern to us, for avoiding sloath:
For when your age (now great) might challenge quiet ease
From toilsome studyes, Lo here comes to light
A Pretious piece, a work, a book, that well will please
The Godly, as a Babe of sweet delight.
Thus we may see how Grace, weak Nature doth excell,
The latter fades, and with old age decayes,
The other fertile grows; for still your years can tell
How to unfold Gods will, and teach his wayes.
Go on dear Sir, thus to make plain Gods Word and mind,
Whilst we injoy you on the Earth below,
Thereby you comfort now, and more shall after find,
When dying, you Eternal joyes shall know.

So Prayes your very Friend and Neighbour
John Taylor *Minister of the Gospel in* Dudley.

Idem de Eodem,

Hexastichon.

PRo tantâ Curâ Smithi, tantoque labore,
Ingentes Cælis sunt Samuelis opes.
En (Lector) quantum, quantum debetur honoris,
Preclaro, in terris, dum manet ille, viro.
Et precor, ut multos posthac Ecclesia tales
Anglicana libros sis habitura pios.

JOHN TAYLOR.

To the Christian

READER

Grace and Peace be Multiplyed.

Christian Reader,

I Hope I shall paß in the crowd of Writers of this time, if in thruſting one Piece more into the throng, I ſhall ſhoulder in this little book without fear of being thronged; eſpecially I may be admitted to put in this Plea, that I believe it is the laſt time I ſhall trouble the Preß in this kind; This being the laſt Service of him, that lives in an old decayed and dropping houſe, that looks for, and expects daily its fall. The incouragement I confeß to this Attempt was, Firſt, that amongſt thoſe Elaborate Commentaries that are publiſhed by ſo many Learned and Godly men (eſpecially in our dayes) upon divers of the Epiſtles, I have not met with any (in our tongue) upon this Epiſtle that ever came to my hands, except the common Annotations *upon the whole New Teſtament. Secondly, the Argument of this Epiſtle was no little inducement unto me to undertake this work, wherein Saint* John *labours to confirm a Godly Lady and her Children to whom he wrote, and in them all the Churches of the Saints, in the Truth of the Goſpel, a-*

gainst all Seducers which then were or hereafter should creep into the Church. Now what Doctrine is more needful to be pressed in these Apostatizing times wherein we live than this? Seeing so many fall away daily from the Truth, and from the open profession of it. O how many have we amongst us with whom we once took sweet counsel together, and together went up into the house of God, that now have lost their first love, and are fallen off? Some to one Sect, some to another, not owning the Saints with whom they seemed to converse so sweetly, but looking upon even the most faithfullest of the Ministry and the Godliest of Professors whose lives are unblameable, as if those onely were the Apostates and Backsliders. O what a thing is man if the Lord do but leave him to himself! How ill would these men have taken it to our hands if but the other day we should have told them, you are the Men and Women that shortly will cry down Sabbaths which now you count Holy, you will cry down those Ministers which now you cry up, and those Ordinances in the which you now so much joy and delight you will nauseate and abhorr, those Family-Duties which now you dare not neglect, the time will come you will cast them aside as needless, as men pretending to a New Light, and such as are raised to the highest form of Perfection, as if these were now above them all, would not these men have answered us as Hazael sometimes did the Prophet, Is thy Servant a Dog that he should do these things? their very Soul would have abhorred such thoughts as these: Yet alas whither are many of these fallen at this day? Alas Christians, is not this Plague begun amongst us, and not in one City, Town, or Country onely, but over-spreading the whole Nation? no sooner can an Impo-

stor

pastor *come into the Countrey (as it is their work to Travel from Country to Country, to Seduce, and make Proselytes, and set open their packs) but many run unto them, and buy up their bray'd and deceitfull waxes. But what shall we say? since this is no new device of Sathan, but such Chapmen he hath ever imployed, and sent abroad, in the purest times of the Church, to broach errors and lyes against the Truth. And was not this the Apostles foretold should come to pass in the last times?* 2 Tim. 4. 3, 4. The times will come, when they will not suffer wholesome Doctrine; but having their ears itching, shall after their own lusts get them an heap of Teachers, and shall turn their ears from the Truth, and shall be given to Fables. *These are the times foretold so long before that we are fallen into, and hence it is, that it was so usual with the Apostles in the constant course of their Preaching, to make this a part of their Sermons, to warn, and forewarn Christians to take heed to themselves, for saith* Paul, *Act.* 20. 30, 31. I know that after my departure grievous Wolves shall enter in, Also of your own selves shall men arise speaking perverse things; *And this is that our Apostle in this Epistle gives in special charge to this Lady and her Children, to whom He wrote,* vers. 8. To look to themselves, that ye lose not the things that ye have done, *for saith he,* Many Deceivers are entred into the World; *and to that end that she might avoid all Seduction by these false Teachers, he gives this further in charge,* vers. 10. If there come any amongst you that bring not this Doctrine *(meaning indeed the Doctrine that he, and the rest of the Apostles had taught)* she *should* not receive such a one to house, *nor* so much as bid him

God

God speed, *that is, hold no Communion or Society at all with such a one. Our Brethren of* New-England, *when this sort of* New-lighted men (*as they call themselves,*) *crept in amongst them, wisely perceived their design, which was indeed to destroy Churches, overthrow Ordinances, and so with these the very heart of Religion, and the power of Godliness; and howsoever there were some that began to suck in their errors, yet the effect of that wicked project was soon prevented, and it was the Wisdome of that Church and Rulers there speedily to spue them out. Something is done in this Exposition to lay open their errors, and to discover their damnable Tenents both in Doctrine and Practice, which I have endeavoured to do; both to Arm thee against these* Seducers, *to stir thee up to faithfulness and perseverance in the Truth received, and to provide for the hour of Temptation, all which bespeaks the Sons of Sion in this Backsliding Age to look well unto. Which that thou maist do, is the dayly Prayer*

Of thy Friend and Servant

in the Gospel

SAMUEL SMITH.

A LOOKING-GLASS FOR LADIES.

The Second Epistle of St. *John*.

Vers. 1. *The Elder to the Elect Lady and her Children, whom I love in the Truth: and not I only, but also all that have known the Truth:*

2. *For the Truths sake which dwelleth in us, and will be in us for ever:*

3. *Grace be with you, mercy and peace from God the Father, and from the Lord Jesus, the Son of the Father, with Truth and Love.*

MOst Interpreters of the most approved Judgement do conceive this Epistle, and that which followeth, to have been both written and penned by *John* the Apostle, that wrote the former Epistle; being that Disciple whom Jesus loved. And indeed for this there is great reason, for both this Second Epistle and that which followeth, agree much with the first, both in the *Style*, the *Argument*, and *Phrase*. So that as for the former Epistle there is no

The Author of this Epistle.

question but it was penned by *John* the Apostle and beloved Disciple of Christ, no more question ought to be made of this.

The Argument. The *Argument* of this Epistle is to Exhort this *Lady* and her *Children*, to whom this Epistle is sent, to remain Constant, and to persevere in the Doctrine of the Gospel which had been taught them; And further, that they take heed to themselves, that they be not Seduced, and drawn into error by; such *Seducers* that were crept in amongst them.

Now what Doctrine is more needfull for these times wherein we live, which being the last, must be worst: wherein those predictions, both of Christ himself, and his Apostles, are so fully accomplished, that *false Christs* shall arise, and *false Prophets*, which shall deceive if it were possible the very Elect. And as there had been false Prophets in the Church in former times, so the Apostle tells us, that there should be false Teachers amongst them, which *privily should bring in Damnable Heresies, denying the Lord that bought them*, and that many will follow them to their Destructions, *by whom the way of truth is evil spoken of*; never was there an Age, or Time, in the Church, wherein the truth of these Predictions were more fully accomplished, than in the times wherein we Live.

Mat. 24. 24.

2 Pet. 2. 1.

This seems to be the Occasion that moved the Apostle to send this Letter or Epistle unto this Virtuous *Lady*, being Converted to the Faith, by the Doctrine of the Gospel that she should stand fast in the Faith, and take heed of these *Seducers*.

The whole Epistle containeth three parts:

1. The Salutation in the three first Verses.

2. The matter of Substance of the Epistle, *viz.* An Exhortation to mutual Love, and constancy in the Faith of Christ, from vers. 4. to the end of the 10. vers.

3. The

3. The Conclusion, wherein two things;
1. A Reason why he is so brief in Writing.
2. A Remembrance of the Love and Commendation of the Sons of the *Ladies* Sister, to this *Lady* their Aunt.

1. *The Elder to the Elect Lady, and her Children,* &c.

In these three Verses we have the Salutation, which is the *Exordium*, or first general part of the Epistle:

Wherein are four particulars:

1. The Person Saluting, described not by his Name, but by his Office, and Calling, *the Elder.*

2. The Persons Saluted, who are; { 1. *The Elect Lady.* 2. *Her Children.*

3. A Testification of his own and the Churches love towards them; *Whom I love,* &c.

4. The Prayer he makes for them; *Grace be with you,* &c.

The Elder.

The Person Saluting is not described by his Name, but by his Office, Dignity, or Calling, *the Elder.* 1. The Person Saluting.

In the Scripture we find two sort of *Elders*: { 1. *Ætate*, Elders by Age. 2. *Dignitate*, Elders by Office.

Elders by Age, properly are such as have seen more years in the World than others; as *Abraham*, *Isaac*, *Iacob*, *Iob*, &c. or such as by reason of years are grown Gray-headed; as *Iacob* was.

Elders in Office, are *Ministers*, *Pastors*, or *Bishops*. All these are called *Elders*, and comprehended under that Name.

Now the Reason why these are so called, is not always taken from their Age, as though these were always the Oldest men; for Wisdome is not always tied to Gray-hairs. But rather in regard of their Wisdome, Stayednes, Experience, and Gravity, that ought to be in such. *Timothy* was but a young Man, yet an *Elder*.

Now Ministers of the New Testament are called πρεσβύτεροι *Elders*, not because they were all Old and Antient for years, but because they were like Old men in respect of their Learning, Discretion, Gravity, in their Wise and Discreet carriage in the World; Thus is *Timothy* called πρεσβύτερος an *Elder*, not in regard of his years, for he was a young man, *Let no man despise thy Youth*, but in regard of that Godliness and Gravity that was in him; And in this sense is the word *Elder* to be taken in this place.

Doct. 1. The name of *Elder* must mind Ministers of their Duty.

Hence we may first observe, that as Ministers retain the same Title of *Presbyters*, or *Elders*, their Names must mind them of their Duties: Namely, that they be men of Gravity, Sobriety, Sober, Just, Temperate, &c. *Let no man despise thy youth, But be thou an Example of the Believer in Word and Conversation, in Charity, in Spirit, in Faith and Purity.* So *Paul* to *Titus*, *A Bishop must be blameless, as the Steward of God, not self Wild, nor soon Angry, not given to Wine*, &c. but Sober, Holy, Just, Temperate, &c. And so carefull was God himself in the time of the Law, that none should serve in the Tabernacle, but from thirty years to fifty, In which time men ordinarily attain to Judgment, Wisdome, Gravity, and Experience: And great Reason, that Ministers should be thus Qualified.

1 Tim. 4. 12.

Numb. 4. 43.

Reas. 1. First, in regard of themselves; these are such as approach nigh unto God, *And the Lord will be Sanctified of all such as approach nigh unto him.*

2. Secondly, in regard of the people, who are more ready to be led by example than by precept. And although it is true, that pure Doctrine and Gospel Ordinances, as the VWord, Sacraments, &c. depend not upon the worthiness of the Minister, who whilst he sitteth in *Moses*'s seat must be heard, yet we see daily, That the wickedness of *Helies* Sons will make the people to abhor the Offerings of the Lord.

1 Sam. 2. 17.

Use 1. Which serves for the just Reproof of many young Ministers

Ministers in our Days, who as they are, *Iuvenes Ætate*, so are they *juvenes Moribus*, As young in Years, so young in Manners, yet dare thrust themselves into his holy Calling, with their long Ruffian like hair, and other Childish and Youthfull toys in their Apparel, no way beseeming a Minister of Christ, whose holy Calling requireth a fuller Age, and other Manners.

Let all those then, that take upon them to be Ministers of Jesus Christ, look well to themselves, and to their own Example, that they approve themselves both to themselves and their Flock, to be Men of *Wisdome*, *Gravity*, *Temperance*, and *Holiness*, every way in Life and Doctrine, Exemplary to others, otherwise their *Motes* will prove *Beams*, and their Examples and Practice will prove a Coppy-book to others, that will be more ready to imitate them in Evil than in Goodness. 2.

The Elder.

We may note further the great *Humility* that was in our Apostle, who being so beloved of Christ his Master, Christ's *Favorite*, as I may so call him, yet doth not here stand to magnifie his Office with the name of an *Evangelist*, *Disciple*, *Apostle*, or the like more honourable Titles, but takes upon him the name of an *Elder*.

This shews what an Excellent Ornament *Humility* is in a Minister; nothing doth more beautifie and adorn a Minister than this grace of *Humility*, this is that Mother grace, the first Lesson that Christ taught his Disciples; *Learn of me to be meek and lowly*, &c. As this grace prospers in the Soul, all other graces prosper there: It is a sign that that man's knowledge and parts are Sanctified in that *Minister*, that is not puft up with parts and gifts. And hence you shall observe in Scripture, that such as have excelled other either in knowledge, or in any other grace, have had the lowest apprehensions of themselves. Christ himself took upon him the *form of a Servant*, *Paul* confesseth

Doct. 2. Humility an excellent Ornament in a Minister. Mat. 11. 29.

Phil. 2. 7.

fesseth himself a *Servant of Jesus Christ.* And Christ
Jo. 13. teacheth his Disciples by washing of their feet, how they ought to carry themselves one toward another. And happy was that Age, and Church, when such Excellent men as this our Apostle was, did style themselves under the name of *Deacons*, and *Elders*.

And when began the Church to decay in Beauty and Honour, but when Vain glorious Titles began to creep into the same? Now that the Ministers of the Word, of all men ought to be *Humble* men, these Reasons shew:

Reas. 1. First, the high esteem that God hath of such, may make us prize this grace of *Humility*; *He hath respect to the lowly (and meek) as for the proud he beholds them afar off. To this man will I look, even to him*
Esay 66. 2. *that is poor, and of a contrite Spirit, and I will dwell*
Esay 57. 15. *with him, that is of a humble and contrite Spirit, to revive the Spirit of the Humble.* All grace thrives and prospers in that Soul, as *Humility* prospers; Pride, especially spiritual Pride, is as a great Thistle in a Garden, no good Herb can prosper by it. It was the *Pharisee* that shewed his *Robes*, and the *Publican* that shewed his *Rags*.

2. Secondly, such a Soul only is capable of grace, and of the increase of grace daily in him; full Vessels can hold no Liquor, and proud and haughty Hearts no Grace; the Vessel must be emptied before any solid Liquor be received, and pride of Heart is the forest Enemy to Grace, and Goodness.

Use 1. This may serve for the just Reprehension of many in these days and times wherein we live, even in the Ministry, that are so far from approving themselves *Elders* in respect of that *Wisdome*, and *Gravity*, *Modesty*, and *Sobriety*, *Humility*, proper to their Calling, That there is much scandal and offence given by many, for their Lightness, Vanity, and Excess, in their Behaviour, which in our times is taken notice of, especially in their long Hair: was it a shame in the

Apostles

Apostles time, for a man to wear long Hair, and was not the Apostles *shame*, a Sin? How comes it now in our days, to be such an Ornament, and in Custom, that Ministers by their Example, should set forth such a light to others? I fear the time is at hand, when God will visit for these things. Beside, if we do but observe the Vanity in attire in many Young men, in their Bands, and Ruffs, some hanging over their Shoulders, behind, and to their breasts before, which to all wise and sober Christians manifest the Vanity that is within, and is followed with shame and scorn from the World: It was the speech of a carnal man, that said that many Ministers need not a *Surplis*, they wear a Surplus every day; Brethren, these weapons become not our Shoulders, we are taught to be otherwise adorned, even with *Sobriety*, *Gravity*, and good example unto our Flock, that we in no wise dishonour our Calling, or cause others meanly to esteem of our Ministry.

And this may serve also for *Exhortation*, for all the Sons of *Levi* that approach near the Lord, and Minister in holy things, that they preserve this grace of *Humility* in them, and take heed of pride, which sin is the Devils first born, and the first sin he poured into our Nature, and by which we carry a Character of the Devil about us; for as the servants of Christ are known by *Humility*, so the servants of Sathan are known by *Pride*: what hath undone so many hopefull Young men in our days, that put out fairly for a time, but their spiritual Pride, thinking themselves some Body, because of their gifts and parts; And for want of *Humility*, have been drawn to be *Anabaptists*, *Quakers*, and what not? Oh consider! 2.

Bernard.

First, that God *exalteth the humble and meek, but resisteth the proud.* It was the Virgins *Meekness* and *Humility*, at her bearing of Christ, that caused all Nations to call her *Blessed*: whereas the proud Angels he thrusts out of Heaven, and *Nebuchadnezzar*, 1. Motives to Humility.

Haman, and *Herod*, their Pride was their ruine.

2. Secondly, as *Humility* grows in the Soul, all other graces of God do grow and proſper there; As for Pride, eſpecially ſpiritual Pride, it ſpoils them all. It is the Aſhes that muſt keep in the Fire, that it be not extinct, and go out in the Hearth; and it is *Humility*, that muſt preſerve Grace in the Soul. O how ſhould this cauſe all, eſpecially in the Miniſtry, to be in love with that Grace which is ſo excellent an Ornament to their Calling!

3. Thirdly, *Humility* is that grace, that above all others makes a man moſt like unto Chriſt, and proves a Miniſter a down-right Diſciple of Jeſus Chriſt. Who Phil. 2. 5, 6. *made himſelf of no Reputation, but took upon him the form of a Servant*, that we might learn this Leſſon of him, to be *Humble*; *Let the ſame mind be in you*, (ſaith the Apoſtle) *that was in Chriſt Jeſus.*

The Elder.

We have one thing more to obſerve out of this word, Inaſmuch as St. *Iohn* writing unto this *Lady*, doth intitle himſelf by the name of *Elder*,

Doct. 3. We are taught, that a Miniſter may be more or leſs in the Magnifying of his Calling, as the neceſſity of the people to whom he writes or ſpeaks doth require.

Miniſters may magnifie their Calling as neceſſity requires.

You ſhall have *Paul* ſometimes magnifying his Calling, as in his Epiſtle to *Titus*, and then he ſtyles himſelf, *a Servant of God*, an *Apoſtle of Jeſus Chriſt*, called to his Office immediately by Jeſus Chriſt. And again, *By the grace of God, I am that I am, and that grace of* 1 Cor. 15. 10. *his which is in me, was not in vain.* And again, *I Laboured more aboundantly than they all.* At another time, 2 Cor. 11. 5. *I am the leaſt of the Apoſtles, not worthy to be called an Apoſtle.* It was for the Cretians ſake that ſometime, and the Churches ſake at other times, and the Goſpels ſake that at another time, the Apoſtle takes this courſe ſometimes to magnifie his Calling, as at other times not to inſiſt upon it.

Uſe. This being ſo, that Miniſters according to the condition

dition of the people, to whom they Preach, or Write, may necessarily stand upon their Dignity and Calling.

When, and at what time ought the Ministers of Christ more to stand up in defence of their Calling, than at this time, when *Quakers*, and Sectaries, and the Rabble amongst us, account so meanly of the Ministry? Have we not a Generation of *Wild-geese*, as *Locusts from the Bottomless pit*, that cry down our Ministry, as no Ministers of Jesus Christ? not one Minister in the Nation though never so excellently Gifted, or howsoever unblameable in Life, that these men will own. Neither is this strange, that they will not own the Messengers of Christ, when they will not own the Message of Christ himself, which Christ sent his servants to deliver. What shall we think of these men? Doth not *Paul* say, *But though that we, or an Angel from Heaven preach unto you otherwise, than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed.* Gal. 1. 8. And what saith our Apostle here? *If there come any unto you, and bring not this Doctrine, receive him not to House, nor bid him God speed, for he that biddeth him God speed, is partaker of his Evil deed.* vers. 10.

Now what is that Doctrine that all must teach, and hold forth under the penalty of a Curse? And what is the Doctrine that such must bring, and must hold forth with whom we may hold Fellowship and Communion? Is it not the Doctrine of Christ, and his Apostles? Gospel Ordinances? But what are the Gospel Ordinances taught by Christ and his Disciples, are not these?

1. The Preaching of the Word; which is the power of God to Salvation. Rom. 1. 16.

2. The Sacrament of Baptism; go teach all Nations, and Baptize. Mat. 28. 19.

3. The Supper of the Lord; that which I have received of the Lord, deliver I unto you, &c. 1 Cor. 11. 23.

4. Singing of Psalms; exercise your selves in Psalms, and is any merry, let him sing Psalms, &c. Col. 3. 16.

5. Prayer

5. Prayer a Gospel Ordinance commanded by Christ.

6. Church Order and Discipline, &c.

Are not all these Gospel Ordinances? And which of these are owned by these people? are not all these Neglected, Contemned, and Despised by them? How will these avoid the Curse denounced against such as before? The Lord in mercy either open their Eyes, and let them see the Damnable condition they are in, and give them Repentence, or speedily purge his Church of them.

And thus much for the first, the Person saluting, *the Elder.*

Now we come to the second, which is the Persons saluted;

Whom we find to be { 1. *The Elect Lady.* 2. *Her Children.*

The Mother is here described by her State { Temporal, *A Lady.* Spiritual, *Elect.*

1. In regard of her Temporal estate in this World, she was a *Lady*, this Title of *Lady*, importeth unto us two things.

1. Her Sex, she was a *Woman.*

2. Her Quality and Condition, she was an Honourable Woman; for the Title of *Lady* is properly a Title of Dignity and Honour, given to none but great Personages.

1. Her Sex.

1. Importeth, that for her Sex; she was a Woman.

Doct. 1. Women as straightly bound to look after the means of Salvation as men.

Whence we may first observe, that VWomen are as straightly bound to look after and attend the means of their Salvation as Men are.

And hence it is, that the Holy Ghost in the Scripture, makes mention of many excellent Women, who are recorded for their Piety, Virtue, and Godliness; As the Widdow of *Sarepta*, who so gladly and freely entertained the Prophet; of old *Hannah*, who attentended so diligently in the Temple; of the Blessed *Virgin*,

Virgin, and her Cozen *Elizabeth*. And there is mention made of divers worthy Women that followed Christ, such as *Mary Magdalen*, *Iohannah*, and *Susannah*. So *Paul* when he Preached at *Philippi*, it is said, that a *Company of devout Women*, as well as Men, *came together*, amongst which was *Lydia* at that time, a pious and godly VVoman. So when *Paul* preached at *Thessalonica*, it is said, that *a great Multitude of them that feared God, came together to hear him*; And amongst the rest, of *the chief Women, not a few*. And certainly, God hath raised up the glory of that Sex, who have been as eminent in Virtue and Piety, as Men have been. Thus the Grand-mother of *Timothy*, *Lois*, and his Mother *Eunice*, are commended for their unfeigned Faith which was in them; And thus are they commended for their Zeal in Religion; Religious fasting; Devout praying; Aboundance of affection, as in *Mary* washing the feet of Christ with her tears: Relieving of the poor, and in divers other graces are they commended, and their godly Practice and Example propounded for imitation.

Luk. 1. 48. Luk. 8. 23. Acts 16. 13. 2 Tim. 1. 5. 2 King. 4. 8. Hest. 4. 16. 1 Sam. 1. 10. Luk. 7. 38. Acts 9. 36.

Yea, if it were expedient to inlarge upon this particular, it were not hard to shew that in many particulars Women have excelled Men; As in Knowledge, *Priscilla* did help *Aquila* her Husband in Godliness, albeit, that *Aquila* was a Godly man. And as in Knowledge, so in Faith, Zeal, Courage, &c.

Rom. 16. 3. Luk. 24. 8, 9. Mat. 15. 28.

Who more ready to follow Christ, and to Minister unto Christ, than Women? who shewed more love and affection to Christ at his Death, when all forsook him, but Women? who followed him to his Cross, came to him the next morning, with their Spices and Balm, &c.

Exod. 38. 13. Judg. 4. 9. Luk. 8. 2, 3. Luk. 23. 27.

The point is clear, The Reasons are:

Firſt, Women are in the Transgression, they likewise lye under the Curse, they have their Infirmities, their Wants, their Corruptions and Sins, as well as men; It stands them therefore in hand, to look to them-

Reas. 1.

themselves, and after the means of grace as well as men.

2. Secondly, *There is neither Male nor Female, for ye* Gal. 3. 28. *are all one in Christ*; Nay, God often chuseth to give grace to such weak ones, to confound the mighty.

3. Thirdly, As there is but one *common Salvation*, to all that are, or shall be saved, and that is by Faith in Acts 16. Christ; *Believe thou in the Lord Iesus Christ, and thou* 31. *shalt be saved*: So is there left but one way to attain it, both to Men and Women, that are or shall be saved; And that is the Conscionable use of those Ordinances, that Christ hath left in his Church, which Women are as strictly bound to look after as Men, if they look for Salvation.

Vse 1. This serves to stop the Mouths of those that are so ready to sharpen their Tongues and Pens, like *Porcupines*, against VVomen-kind? Shall we so look upon their *Infirmities*, so as to forget their *Virtues*? VVhat man can say, that he is free from his faults, his errors, and imperfections, and can we look for perfection in the weaker Sex? It is enough that God hath so highly honoured them, why should any disdain them? your best Gold must have some allowance, and do but allow them theirs, and they will be good.

2. Secondly, This meets with that Damnable tenet of the Church of *Rome*, That teach, that it nothing concerns VVomen, to busie themselves in matters of Religion, as that which concerns them not.

To whom I answer;

1. If they could prove, that VVomen had no Souls to save, and lose, then these, and the like graceless speeches, might the more easily be admitted; But, Hab. 2. *if the just shall live by his own Faith*, then it concerns VVomen as well as Men to look to themselves.

2. By this Rule, a man might have come to *Mary*, when she sat at Christ's feet, hearing him Preach, and asked her thus; Have you nothing else to do? whereas

whereas Christ justifies her therein, and tells *Martha* her Sister, that *Mary had chosen the better part, which should never be taken from her.* Luk. 10. 41.

Secondly, observe here what an incouragement this may be to VWomen in the powerfull profession of Religion. Seeing if they do things worthy of commendations, God takes notice of them; *Maries* Box of Oyntment shall be spoke of whereſoever the Gospel is preached, and the VViddows mites is left recorded to posterity, a gift that proceeded from a large Heart; so is that nights Lodging that *Rahab* gave the *Spies*, with the like. These are recorded as for the praise, so for the greater incouragement of Women, the weaker Sex, to be Zealous in good works, when they may see that their good duties, and service of love are so accepted of God. *Use 2.* Luk. 21. 2. Josh. 2. 1.

Let not VWomen please themselves, and think it enough that their Husbands are Godly and Religious, go to Church, be carefull to perform good Duties, when in the mean time themselves are careless, and negligent therein; for this shall not excuse them in that Day, *when two shall be in a Bed, the one received, the other left*; and though an unbelieving VWife may be sanctified by a believing Husband, yet she shall never be saved but by her own Faith. *Use 3.* Mat. 24.

And let all VWomen consider

1. That though they have this, or that Business, here one thing, and there another, yet *one thing is necessary.* And when Christ was Preaching, and *Mary* sat at his feet to hear him, if *Martha* her Sister had let the Pot seeth over at that time, it had been no ill Huswifry.
2. That all things in the VWorld are vile and base, in respect of this one thing; *Paul* could say, *I esteem all things but Dung*, &c. Phil. 3. 8
3. That it is this, and only this, that will stand us in stead when Death comes, and all Earthly comforts fail, when a man can say with *Hezekiah*, *Remember* Esay. 38. 3.

her Lord that I have walked before thee in truth, and with an upright heart.

Use 4. And last of all this may serve to mind Husbands of their Duty, namely, that when they shall find their Wives Cold & careless in the practice of their duty in Gods service, That they use all good and lawful means to quicken and provoke them. That Husband loves aright, when his love extends it self to the soul of his Wife.

And thus much Concerning her Sex, She was a Woman.

1. Circumstance, her Quality or condition, A Lady.

The second Circumstance propounded is her Quality and condition, a *Lady*.

Doct. It stands with Religion, that there be difference of degrees amongst men and women.

This title importeth her Condition, and Quality, that she was some Gentlewoman, or some Honorable person. The Point is,

That it is not against the will of God, or Religion of Jesus Christ, that there should be a difference of Estate, and diversity of degrees amongst Men and Women in this life.

We see this in our bodies, there be some members of more honorable use than others; in a house there be some vessels of Earth, some of Wood, some of Silver. So likewise in this body, the Lords great house, the Lord hath so disposed of the same. Some goe before others in Wisdome, some in Learning, some in Riches, &c. and so the Lord will have these Reverenced and had in honor for their gifts sake.

Abraham was a great Man, and lord amongst the People, and accordingly highly esteemed and Reverenced amongst the People, Such were *David, Solomon, Hezechiah &c.* And in the new Testament we read of the *Centurion, Cornelius, Philemon* and others, some that were Rulers, and Governors set over others as Rulers. Is not Superiority in Church, State, and Families set up by God himself? *All Power is of God*; and we are commanded *to honor all men*, all men as men, and some especially before others, as preferred by God himself before

Rom. 13. 1.

before others. This is injoyned by the Apostle, *Be kindly affectionat one towards another with Brotherly love, in giving honor goe one before another.* And it is the Lords own speciall Command, *Thou shalt rise up before the hoary head, and honor the person of the old man, and dread thy God: I am the Lord.* And great Reason. Rom. 12. 10. Levit. 19. 32.

First, Because it is Gods Ordinance that it should be so. *Let every soul be subject to the Higher powers, for there is no power but of God.* And we are Commanded to honor all men, and some in a more special manner whom God hath honored in parts, Dignity, Riches, or other Respects above others, *Reason.* Rom. 13. 1, 1 Pet. 2. 17.

Secondly, As it is Gods Ordinance that it should be so: So it is Commodious and necessary, that there should be some High, some Low, some Superiours, some Inferiours, some Rich, some Poor, some to Command, and some to Obey: For without this distinction amongst men, all would be soon out of Order. And if any ask the Reason of this difference, and inequality amongst men, There can no other Reason be rendred, but the Lord hath done it for his own Glory, and our good, that there should be this inequality amongst men. 2.

What Spirit are then those men led by that would have a Parity and Equality amongst all Estates and Condition, both in Estates, and Dignity? As our *Levillers* hold, and indeavoured to set up amongst us; was not this the ready way to Confusion in Church and State? *Use* 1.

But especially that generation of *Quakers* that are lately sprung up amongst us, that will acknowledg no difference amonst the Sons of men, let him be, *King* or *Keisar*, Judg or Justice, Noble or Simple, all is one to them. It seems that they were led by another Spirit than St. *John* was, who styles this godly Matron to whom he Wrote, by this Honorable title of *Lady*. Such Monsters have these Licentious times of Liberty brought forth amongst us, as are our *Quakers*, a Proud, Seditious, 2.

and

and Tumultuous generation, who under pretence of Christian Liberty, have Broached abroad in the World this Damnable Doctrin, That *they are to honor no man after the Flesh*; Will give no Titles to men, no Honor to Majestrates, no Reverence to Ministers, or any Honor to their Parents, In opposition to all manner of Civil honor, required by God himself in Scripture.

Object: But if I have respect to him that weareth a gold ring, or gorgious apparrel, have I not the Faith of our Lord Jesus Christ in respect of persons, and do not I dishonor God in so doing?

Answ: A meer Cavil of *Fanaticks*, who calls for honor to be given to pride, or to any man that is apparently evil for his sins sake, which is his own shame? But speak out. Is not Superiority Gods Ordinance in State, in Church, and in Families? And hath not God set these men up in these places of Dignity and Superiority, that they might be Honored?

Hath God called these men some to be Majestrates, some Ministers, Parents, and Masters, and shall we not give them that honor that God hath put upon them, but we must honor their Sin? the act of Civil honor and Civility is Lawful and commendable, we plead not for any Corruption in it.

But because this is the common practice of these People, in their proud, Cynical, and Contemptuous Cariage towards all sorts and Ranks of men, putting no difference, nor acknowledging no reverence to any, High or Low, as is seen daily amonst them; I shall now to my former testimonies alleged, and Arguments produced to strengthen what hath ben said, bring in some Scripture Examples of Civil gestures of Reverence, that the Saints of old have performed to their Superiours, and that not against the Word, but agreeable to the VVord and Scripture, and to the Law and rule of the fift Commandement.

VVas it *Abrahams* Sin to bow to Heathen men the Children of *Heth* when he did it only in a Civil way? *Gen.* 23. 7. Was

VVas it a Sin in *Iosephs* Brethren to bow to *Ioseph* being a Magistrate and Ruler in *Ægypt*? *Gen.* 43. 26. 28.

VVas it a Sin in *David* to shew such Honor and Reverence to King *Saul*, albeit a wiked man? 1 *Sam.* 24. 8. or

Was it a Sin in *Mephibosheth*, *Abigal*, and *Nathan* the Lords Prophet, to bow to *David* a good man? 2 *Sam.* 9. 8.

And for your Rudness and incivility towards the Ministers of Christ which you shew daily, both by words, calling some *Iack* or *Iohn*, *Tom* or *Thomas* &c. Was that a sin in the Woman of *Shunem* to give such honour or to shew such respect to *Elisha*, who fell at his feet &c? 2 Reg. 4 37.

Was it a sin in *Ruth* to bow to *Boaz*? *Ruth* 2. 10.

Was it a sin in *Bathsheba* to bow to *David* her Husband? 1 *Reg.* 1. 26. 1 Reg. 2. 19.

Or was it a sin for *Solomon* to bow to *Bathsheba* his Mother?

These and many the like instances might be produced out of the Scripture, which our *Quakers* will not allow of; Scripture proof, and Scripture Testimony they will not allow of, they have the Spirit, the Scripture is but the letter, they have a light within that surpasses all. As if the Spirit and the Scripture did clash one against the other.

Where is the Spirit of Meekness, Humility, and Sobriety in these men?

For shame either inform your Judgment, or reform your Ways; And know that God hath appointed degrees of Estates and Conditions in the World, and it is the Duty of every one to know his place and station wherein God hath set him.

LADY.

VVe have one thing more to observe from this Honorable title given to this VVoman: being called and Converted to the Faith of Jesus Christ.

That there is no sort of people, Male, or Female,

Doct. Of all Ranks and Conditions God hath some whom he calls.

Noble, or Simple, Rich, nor Poor, whom God hath not elected and chosen to life and salvation.

Indeed the Apostle saith, *Not many wise, not many Noble*, &c. he saith not *any*: But not *many*: for Sex, Women as well as men, as *Mary* the blessed Virgin, *Joanna* the wife of *Herods* steward, *Lydia*, *Dorcas*, this *Lady*, &c.

Luk. 1. 28 Act. 16 14. Acts 10.

For Calling, we have example from the King, to the Begger, that God hath called some.

Yea of all Ranks and Conditions of men; there is no Ranck, Estate, or Condition of men, *Publicans*, *Harlots*, *Captains*, *Souldiers*, *Sailors*, *Beggers*, *Iewes*, *Gentiles*, *Barbarians*, *Scythians*, Bond, nor Free, but God hath chosen some of these to be heirs of Life and Salvation. So that the Lord hath no respect of any Dignity, Degree, or Privilege in any one sort of People above another, that he should make choice of to set his love, and bestow his grace more than another. *God is no accepter of persons.* And the Reasons are.

Acts 10. 34.

Reason. 1. Because God *would have all men to be saved, and come to the knowledge of the truth*: that is of all sorts, of all degrees, of all ages, and in all places.

2. Secondly, God Judgeth not as man Judgeth, man Judgeth by the crooked rule of sense, sight, reason, and outward appearance, but with God it is not so. One of the sons of *Ishai* is to be chosen King, by Gods appointment, but *Samuel* is forbidden *not to look at his countenance, nor on the hight of his Stature*: And the Reason is given, *For God seeth not as man seeth, man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord beholdeth the heart.*

1 Sam. 16 7.

3. Thirdly, This were an unequal valuation to compare, much less to preferr outward Privileges and Prerogatives, between things Spiritual, and eternal, betwixt which there is no proportion.

use. 1. Seing then that of all ranks, and conditions of mankind, God hath and doth make choice of some to be heirs of life and salvation, why should not the same mind

mind be in us that was in God himself?

In all *Civil* Elections, as in Knights, and Burgesses for Parlaments, and Magistrates in Burroughs, and Towns, we should chuse in God, and for God, without regard of outward privileges, favour or friends, any further than they may be looked upon as Serviceable to God and his Church. And those, and those only should we look upon to have our hearts and affections, our vote and choice.

2. In our carriage towards our Brethren, that Christians take heed that they think not too meanly of their Brethren that are poor and contemptible in the eyes of the world, Since *God hath chosen the poor to be rich in Faith.* If God hath chosen them, and set his love upon them, it is dangerous to think basely and meanly of such.

Use 2. If God accept not of men for any outward privilege, as Riches, Honor, Wisdom, Parts, &c. What reason is there then, that any of these outward things should take up our hearts? Seing that if we could obtain all these Earthly felicities, we are no whit the more in Gods books, or Gods accompt. *No man* (saith Solomon) *knoweth love, or hatred, of all that is before him.* *Dives* may be clad more gorgiously, and fare more deliciously, and yet poor *Lazarus* more happier in the end. And hence is it that the Lord gives this expres charge, *Let not the rich man rejoice in his riches, nor the strong man in his strength: But if any man glory, let him glory in this, that he knoweth me to be the Lord.*

Eccle. 9. 2.

Jer 9. 24.

Use. 3. And lastly, Let those great ones of the world whom God hath chosen to himself, chosen, and converted, Be thankful unto the Lord, who hath passed by so many of their Rank, Quality, and Condition, yet hath set his love upon them, and made them to differ, a mercy not to be forgoten by them.

LADY.

There is one thing more to be observed from her Title. viz, In that a *Lady* was called and converted to

Faith of Jesus Christ, so great, so honorable, and so eminent a Person,

Doct. Not the greatness of any can exempt them from holy Duties.

We may observe, that it is not the birth, the honor, or outward preferments or privileges in this world, be they what they may be, that can privilege or exempt any from the Exercise of holy Duties. If any might plead an immunity from holy Duties, and Religious Exercises, who might more than this *Lady*? 1. For her Sex, she was a Woman. 2. For her Quality and Condition, a *Lady*, or Honorable woman. Yet the holy Ghost hath recorded it here to her just praise that she was godly and religious. And this was it that made many of the Lords worthies so renowned in Gods book, the Eminency of whose persons and multitude of imployments did no whit hinder them from Religious Duties.

David made the exercise of Religion the delight of his Soul, *In the Morning will I direct my prayers unto thee, and will look up. And seven times a day will I praise thee because of thy righteous judgments.* *Abraham* was a great Prince, yet diligently instructed his Family. Thus good *Hezechiah* calls all *Israel*, to the worship of God, and joyned with them himself. *Iob*, a great man, yet very mindfull of Gods service. And for this is the King of *Nineve* commended, that when he heard of the approaching Judgment upon him and his City, he stands not still like an Image wrapt in gold, but he himself is the first that sets himself about the Reformation. And for this cause are Kings called *Nursing-Fathers*, and Queens *Nursing Mothers*, as being exemplary to the people in Religion, and Piety.

Psal 5.7. Gen. 18. 2 Chron. 30. 19.

Reas. 1. 1 Sam. 2. 36.

May be drawn from the Rule of Equity, *When much is given, much shall be required.* The Lord having honored such above others, Expects to be honored of such afore others. And indeed who should do the greatest work, but those that receive the greatest wages?

2. Secondly, The benefit that great ones, such as excel others in Dignity, Riches, Honor, &c. shall receive by

by their forwardness, and zeal in Religion, may provoke them thereto. For besides the salvation of their own Souls, they shall hereby Establish their own Thrones and Kingdoms. What made *Davids* Kingdome so firm to him, and his Posterity, but his *Piety* and *Zeal*, and keeping close to God? whereas Idolatry, neglect of Gods worship, and service, and other sins in a nation, Ruinates all, as *Samuel* told *Saul*, *Thou hast cast away the word of the Lord, and the Lord hath cast off thee from being King*. And indeed we shall finde that the greatest honor that ever came to the Kings of *Juda* and *Israel* was this, that they were zealous for Religon, advanced Religion, put down the high places &c. And their greatest dishonor was when they were negligent and careless therein. 1 Sam. 15. 7.

But especially Gods command calls for this Duty, that such as are Superiours, and go before others either in Riches, Honor, Authority, or Place, should be exemplary to others. *Thou, thy Son, thy Daughter, and all that is within thy Gates*. Princes, Magistrates, Parents, Masters must look to it, that all within their *Gates* keep the Commandements of God: And the neglect of their Duty, as it will tend to the hurt of many, so will it cause a sad reckoning and accompt that such shall one day give up unto God. 3.

This serves for the just reproof of the vain conceit of those, who because they are advanced to high places and Dignities in the world, conceive that they are not so straightly tyed to serve God as others are. What so strictly to Sanctifie the Sabbath, to hear, to read, is fast and pray, and to perform family Duties, this to thought by some to be precisness to expect these things from great men, Lords, and Ladies, &c. Their Devotion is rather to the looking-glass, their curling of their hair, their pouncing and painting, with their placing their spots, these are more looked after than the adorning of the inward man. O that such would but look upon this *Lady* and her Sister so highly commended *Use* 1.

mended in this Epistle, for their zeal in Religion, and Godly care of their Children and Families. And
Acts 17. 4. those noble Dames of *Thessalonica*, who were so highly commended for their Godlyness. But whilest these think themselves too good, and too great to do God service, God refuseth to do them that honor to admit them into his service.

2. Secondly, This shews the extreme folly of those, who desire to be Honorable in the world, and desire to be so thought and looked uppon, and yet lay not the ground-work of true Honor, in Religion and in the Service of God; these build their Reputation upon a Sandy foundation, It is only the Righteous whose memory is blessed, and the name of the wicked shall rot.

And thus much for the Temporal estate of this *Lady*, set down, 1 By her Sex, she was a woman. 2. By her Quality and Condition, she was a *Lady*.

2. By her Spiritual Estate, or her condition by Grace. The second part of her condition here set down, is her *Spiritual* estate, or her Estate by Grace, she was *Elect*.

Elect. What this word *Elect* in this place doth import and signifie; To omit the Judgement of some, the most Orthodox amongst Interpreters, and of the most approved Judgment, by *Elect* in this place, take it to be meant, as elsewhere it is in Scripture, to be meant such a one, as is by God Elected, and chosen unto eternal Life.

And this is indeed the most native and proper signification of the word *Elect*, in this place to be taken.

q. d. The Elder to that Elect Lady, whom God Almighty in his great mercy, hath admitted into the Society and Number of his Elect.

To the like purpose speaketh Saint *Paul*, *We ought*
2 Thes. 2. 13. *always to give thanks to God for you, Brethren, beloved of the Lord; because God hath from the beginning, chosen you to Salvation.*

And

And so is this Gratulatory speech of our Apostle, implying the inward joy of Heart for that grace and mercy the Lord had shewed to this *Lady* in her Election.

Now whereas this *Lady* is called the *Elect Lady*, in regard she was one of the society of God's Elect, and one that he had purposed to make an heir of Life and Salvation:

For our better instruction in this point, we will consider,

1. Who they are, that are called the *Elect* of God.
2. How a man may know that he is of that Number.

First, Who are they that are called the *Elect* of God, as this *Lady* here is? 1. Who are Elect.

Resp. The *Elect* are those whom God of his own good pleasure, and free grace, hath purposed to save from that Condemnation which all men by reason of sin have deserved.

In this Definition of *Election*, note two things.

1. That howsoever all men, by reason of sin, deserve to be Damned, yet hath God elected, and chosen some to be heirs of Life.
2. That those whom God doth thus Elect, he doth Elect them of his own free grace.

1. That howsoever all men, by reason of sin, deserve Condemnation; yet of this number of lost Mankind, which by nature are Children of wrath, and heirs of Hell, God hath elected and chosen some, to be Heirs of Life and Salvation. *Iacob* and *Esau* were both the Children of one Father, and of one Mother, yet *Iacob have I loved, and Esau have I hated*; God left *Esau* as he found him, in his Natural corruption, to him he did no injury, but makes choice of *Iacob*, to him he shews mercy. Gen. 25. Rom. 9.

I confess, that this is such a point of the Divine truth of God, as with great sobriety ought to be handled, and that to understanding and grown Chri-

ſtians, ſuch as have profited well in the Doctrine of the beginning of Chriſt, and are fitted to receive this truth, as meat, not for Babes, but Strong men. Now that there is this *Election* of ſome, and Rejection of others, the Scriptures are plentifull to prove it; *He*

Ephe. 1. 4 v. 5. *hath choſen us in him, before the Foundation of the World was:* And, *He hath predeſtinated us unto the Adoption*

Rom. 9. 11. v. 16. *of Children, that the purpoſe of God according to Election might ſtand,* &c. *It is not in him that willeth, nor*

Rom. 8. 30. *him that runneth, but in God that ſheweth mercy; whom he predeſtinated, them he called,* &c. *Many* (ſaith

Mat. 22. Act. 13. 48. Chriſt) *ſhall come from the Eaſt, and Weſt,* &c. not all; *Many are called, but few are choſen.* And when

Rom. 9. 22, 23. *Paul* preached, the Text ſaith, *As many as were ordained to eternal Life, believed,* and there are *Veſſels of mercy prepared for Glory, ſo are there Veſſels of wrath prepared for Deſtruction.*

Now if it be demanded, why God hath made choice of ſome, and not of others, and that before

Rom. 9. 11, 12. they had done either good or evil, as it is ſaid of *Iacob* and *Eſau*;

In this caſe, I muſt anſwer with the Prophet, *Woe*

Eſay. 45. 9. *to him that ſtriveth with his Maker,* the Clay may not contend with the Potter; Man that is but duſt and aſhes, may not reaſon the caſe with his Creator. To know why God hath made choice of ſome, and not of others, there is no other reaſon to be given, or anſwer to be made, but that it is his good pleaſure, it is his will, *Miſericordia ejus, cauſa Miſericordiæ,* to one he ſhews Mercy, to the other he doth no Injury.

Aug. *Hinc fit miſericordia, tibi non fit injuria.*

But here ariſeth that main Objection, that troubles many; If I be choſen to Life and Salvation, then I ſhall be ſaved; If otherwiſe, I cannot avoid it.

Object.

Anſ. I anſwer, the determinate Counſel of God doth not take away the nature of Secondary cauſes, or take away the means, but rather order and diſpoſe the means to their appointed end. God gave to *Paul* the Lives of all that were in the Ship, and they ſhall all be

be saved; but what saith *Paul? except ye abide in the Ship, ye can not be saved.* The Lord in disposing of Temporal blessings, sets down the means how they are attained; *I will hear the Heavens, and they shall hear the Earth, and the Earth shall hear the Corn and Wine, and they shall hear Israel.* So likewise in Spiritual blessings, God appoints means how they are attained; God by his Son, *He hath chosen us in him*; Christ by the Word, the Word by the Spirit, these work Faith to take hold on Christ, who presents us to God his Father; so here. Act. Hos. 2. 11. Eph. 1 14.

Here is *Election*, *He hath chosen us*; the means is effectual Calling, Adoption, Redemption, &c. and the End and the Means ever go together.

The use we are to make of this point, is, that seeing there is an *Election*, that is a choosing out of some to be Vessels of Mercy, and a leaving of others to perish for ever, We are taught not to wonder, to see the greatest part of the World, to lye, and walk on daily in a course of sin; but we should rather hereby take occasion, to magnifie the grace, and undeserved favour of God, that he hath not left us, as he hath left them, in the same state and condition of Nature, but hath been pleased to put a difference betwixt us and others by Grace, where there was none by Nature. *Use*

Secondly, that those whom God doth thus *Elect*, and make choice of to be Heirs of Life, and Salvation, that this is of his own free grace; this is clear by that of the Apostle, *Not by the works of Righteousness which we had done, but according to his mercy he saved us.* And again, *He hath saved us, and called us with a holy Calling.* 2. Election of Gods free grace. Tit. 3. 5. 2 Tim. 1. 9.

And in handling of this point, I shall shew two things:

1. I shall shew in general, How Salvation is of God's free grace.

2. How Salvation in all the parts and degrees of it, is from free grace. To

1. Salvation is of God free grace. Pſ 3 vlt Pſ.27. 1.

To the firſt, All the Prophets and Apoſtles give witneſs. *Salvation is of the Lord; and the Lord is my Salvation. Behold, God is my Salvation, I will truſt, and not fear.* And again, *O God, thou Saviour of Iſrael.* See *Pſ.* 84. 11. *Eſay* 25. 9. *Ezek.* 34. 22. *Ier.* 17. 14. *Eſay* 63. 1. *Tit.* 3. 5. *Eph.* 2. 8 &c.

Gen. 3. 15 Gal. 4. 4.

And it muſt needs be, that our Salvation is of free grace: for

1. Who found out that *new and living way* for man's Salvation? was it not God?

2. Who prepared the means? *He ſent his Son, made of a Woman*, &c.

3. He was contented to take ſatisfaction of our Surety, when he might have required the ſame at our hands, the Principal, and then no Fleſh had been ſaved.

4. It is he that hath ſent his Word, his Goſpel of Reconciliation? It is he that hath fitted his Miniſters for the work of the Miniſtry, and to reveil this Miſtery of Salvation unto us. All which clears the point, that our Salvation is of God's free grace.

Now we ſhall ſhew, that our Salvation in all the parts and degrees of it, comes from God, and is of his free grace.

2. In the parts of it.

Secondly, Salvation in all the parts and degrees of it, comes from God, and is of his free grace.

1. Election. Rom. 11. 5. 2 Tim. 1. 9.

First, *Election; At this time there is a remnant, according to the Election of grace*: And that no queſtion might be made hereof, the Apoſtle prevents the Objection in the next words; *If it be of grace, it is no more of works, or elſe were grace no grace.* And again, *We are called with a holy Calling, not according to our works, but according to his purpoſe and grace.* Act. 13. 48. Eph. 2 9. Rom. 8. 30. Rom. 6. 23.

2. Calling. Ephe. 5.

Secondly, Effectual Calling is of his meer *Mercy* and *Grace*, calling men out of the World, and inviteth them to Life, and Salvation: It is he that muſt ſpeak in the ſinners ear, *Awake thou that ſleepeſt, and ſtand*

stand up from the Dead. It is he that sometimes *exhorts* us, *turn ye, turn ye, why will ye dy &c?* He sometimes *invites* us to come in to the feast. It is he that sometimes beseecheth, and compels us to come in: And hence it is that this Calling is called a *Heavenly Calling*, because it comes from Heaven. Eze 18. Matt. 22.

3. *Justification.*

Thirdly, *Iustification*, This likewise comes from God, and from his free grace alone. *It is God that justifies, who shall condemn?* See Gal. 3. 8. Rom. 3. 30. Rom. 3. 22. 24. And this is an Act of God the Father upon believers, whereby the Debts and Sins of believers are charged on Christ, and the merits and righteousness of Christ is imputed to the believer, this comes from God. Rom. 8. 3.

4. *Sanctification.*

Fourthly, *Sanctification*, This both in the begining, and perfection of it comes from God. *Ye shall keep my statutes and do them, I am the Lord which sanctified you.* We cannot keep Gods statutes unless God sanctifie us thereto. See Jude 1. *Sanctified by God the Father.* 1 Cor. 1. 30. Ioh. 10. 36. Ioh. 17. 17. 1 Thes. 5. 23.

5. Eternall life.

Fiftly, Eternal life it self is the gift of God: this is clear likewise. *The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life*, that is no wages but a gift. And *to sit on my right hand and the other on my left, is not mine to give, but it shall be given to them for whom it is prepared.* See Luk. 12. 32. Ioh. 10. 28. Act. 20. 32. 2 Tim. 4. 8. Rev. 2. 10. Rom. 6. 23. Mat. 20. 23.

6. *Faith.*

And last of all, *Faith* it self, whereby we receive all those forementioned graces, this is a Supernatural gift. God the Father in Christ, by the Holy ghost, is the Author of it. This appeareth.

It is called a *Heavenly gift*, and why heavenly? but because it comes from Heaven. And *Paul* shewes that to believe in Christ is a gift given us. *To you it is given.* It is also Numbred among the gifts of the Spirit. So, *which had believed thorough grace.* See Ioh. 6. 44. Gal. 3. 22. The Scriptures then are plain and evident herein Heb. 6. 4. Phil. 1. 29. 1. Cor. 12. Act. 18. 27.

herein to shew that *Faith* that is the hand of the soul to lay hold on Eternal life, and all graces requisite thereto come from Gods free grace.

Let us Apply this.

Use 1. This shews in what a sad condition such poor souls are in, that look for life and salvation from something in themselves, as their good prayers, their good serving of God, their honest meanings, and their good works &c. As if these special gifts and graces which appertain to life, and salvation, were in their own power, and not the free grace of God in Christ, And if when they come to dy they have but time to cry *Lord have mercy on me*, think all is well. But O the sad lamentation that many make at that time! O that I could beleeve! and what have I to do with mercy, that have despised mercy so long? when these mens consciences shall come to be awakened, and their sins shall be set before them. Then let the Drunkard beleeve if he can, then let the Blasphemer beleeve if he can, when they shall now apprehend Gods wrath, and this everlasting burning. Dispair thou canst, Curse thou maist, But thou canst not finde in thy heart to *Repent* and *Beleeve*, these are Gods gifts, the Minister may tell thee that God is merciful, but thou wilt tell him he hath no mercy for thee. Learn this lesson then betimes, that God is the God of all grace, and beg these graces from him, if we look to be saved.

2.

Is salvation it self, and all those graces that appertain thereto, Gods free gift? Then let those upon whom God hath bestowed these rare and precious graces, be thankfull for them. That the Lord should not only offer Salvation to thee, but also give thee to believe, to receive it, to lay hold upon eternal life, Flesh and Blood hath not revealed these things unto you. Therefore give God all the glory of all your graces. And do but consider,

How many live under the same means of grace, that thou

thou hast don, and yet were never wrought upon; but remain in their sins and in the hardness of their hearts to this day; have you passed the Rocks, the Dangers, and Shelves, and are come to partake of these saving graces, O bless the Lord, and walk worthy of so great salvavation.

Thirdly, The consideration hereof, that all is of free grace, may teach us moderation, and meekness towards such as are not yet called; If we find in our own selves any grace or goodness, more than in others, let us know that this came not from the goodness of our Nature, but from God; which Consideration, as it will keep us humble, so will it cause us to pitty and pray for others, and to wait with patience if God at last will shew them the like mercy to give them repentance unto life. 3.

Thus much of the first, VVho they are that are called the Elect of God.

Now we are to come to the second Particular, viz. how a man may come to know himself to be *Elect*, as this *Lady* was? 2. How a man may know he is Elect.

By the life of grace.

For even as life is known to be in the Body by the motions of it, even so is this Spiritual life, the life of *Grace*, discerned by the proper Works and fruits of *Grace*. Grace is Lively, Active, and Stirring, wheresoever it is, try your selves then, and the truth of your *Grace* by these few markes.

Firſt, There is a Spiritual sense and feeling of sin, and corruption; as where there is Natural life it is sensible of whatsoever opposeth it, or is contrary unto it, if it be but the prick of a pin, it is sensible of it: So is Sin to the soul that hath grace. *I feel* (saith Paul) *a law in my members rebelling against the law of my minde.* But most are past feeling, a sign they are dead in trespasses and sins, and want this life. 1. Rom. 7. 23.

Secondly, Life is active and full of motion: So is the life of grace, it will be active and stirring in 2.

Gods

Gods service, and in the practice of Godliness, now hearing, then reading, anon praying, &c. and all this from an inward principle that puts them on.

3. Thirdly, Where this life of grace is, there will be a spiritual Appetite after that which is for the maintenance of this spiritual life. As the Infant new born, if it be in perfect health, naturally desires the breast: So doth a gracious soul hunger & thirst after the food of the Soul.

1 Pet. 2. 2.

Fourthly, It is a good sign, and mark of grace, to own Gods Image in others, *He maketh much of them that fear the Lord.* And *by this ye shall know that ye are translated from death to life, because ye love the brethren.* Children naturally love their Brethren and Sisters, and the children of God love those that are begotten of God.

4.

Fiftly, As natural life contends for self-preservation, as we see in all Creatures: So will this life of grace wait upon the means of grace, get daily strength thereby, and strive daily against sin, and corruption, which is contrary to it. *The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh, &c.*

5.

Gal. 5. 17.

These and the like are marks of our Election. And thus much for the first person Saluted, *the Elect Lady.*

2. Persons saluted, *her children.*

The second persons that are here Saluted, are this Ladies *Children, And her Children.*

This addeth much to the Commendation of this *Lady*, that as her self was a Devout and Holy woman, so it appears that her children were the like. Such as in their tender years applyed themselves to Religion.

Doct. It is a great blessing to a Family, when the Heads are believers.

Note hence first of all, what a great blessing it is to a Family, when the Heads are believers, fearing God. These bring a blessing to the whole Family, and those that are under them. This *Lady* being a Godly Matron, brought a blessing to the whole Family, they all fared the better for her sake. Thus is *Abraham* commended for his care of his Family. For this is *Ioshua* commended, *I and my house will serve the Lord.* And *David*, for his zeal in the goverment of his Family;

Gen. 18. 17, 19. Iosu. 24. 25.

I

I will walk (saith he) *in the midst of my house with a perfect heart.* It is not enough for Parents and Masters, to be themselves Religious, and such as fear God, but they must take care of their Children, and Servants, and all that are within their *Gates*, that are under them, and depend upon them. Yea, from this Example of this *Lady* here, All Superiours are bound to take care and to provide for the welfare of those that are under them, and depend upon them; *Princes*, and *Magistrats*, *Kings* themselves are to be *Nursing Fathers*, and Queens *Nursing Mothers*, to the People. Ps. 101. 2. &c.

Whereas on the contrary, it is a fearfull judgment of God upon a Land, and on that Family, when *Princes* and *Superiours*, *Parents*, and *Masters*, are Irreligious, Vain, and Prophane, or any way countenance, or connive at profaneſs. These instead of bringing a blessing upon their Inferiours, bring a Curse.

Parents love to their children, calls for this duty at their hands. *Can a mother forget her sucking child*, *that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb?* Saith the Lord. And by how much the more excellent, & precious the soul is, than the body, the more should the care of Parents be to the souls of their children, than their bodies. *Reas.* 1. Esai. 49. 15.

Secondly, The consideration, that Parents have been the means to bring their children under the curse, and to bind them over to wrath, may provoke them to this Duty. It is the Parents that have conveyed sin and corruption to their children, made them heirs of Wrath, and of Hell by Nature; And are not they bound in justice to help them out of that condition, that they may be saved at last? 2.

Thirdly, There cannot be a more sure and comfortable testimony, in the hearts and consciences of all superiours, especially Parents, and Masters, of the truth of grace in themselves, than when they shall carefully endeavour to plant grace in their children and inferiours. 3.

ours. This we shall observe to have been the fruit of
Gen. 18. 19. sound conversion in *Abraham*, *Ioseph*, *Cornelius*,
Iosu. 24. 15. *Lydia*, the chief Ruler of the Synagogue &c. So that
Act. 10. 2. if Parents desire to have sound testimony of their own
Act. 16. 33. Conversion, they may derive much from their care
Act. 18. 8. to work the like grace in their children.

Vse. 1. This serves to reprove the great neglect of this Duty, especially amongst great ones, Lords, Ladies, Gentlemen, and Gentlewomen. These look for this at their Childrens hands, and at their Servants hands, that they should serve them, and reverence them: But to teach them to reverence and serve the Lord of Heaven, they think that this nothing concerns them. And hence it comes to pass many times, that in the greatest houses, are commonly the greatest disorders. Drunkennesse, Swearing, and all Prophanesse, nor otherwise indeed than a Cage of unclean beasts. It was not so in the house of this *Lady*, but her house was a little Church unto God.

2. Secondly, From the Practice and Example of this *Lady*, thus teaching and instructing her Children and Family, we may see a good Character of a good Christian indeed; He is the same in private, as he is in publique, in his own Family, as he is at Church, and abroad. Not a Saint at Church, and a Devil at home; But if you follow this man home to his house, You shall finde him *walking wisely in the midst of his house*
Ps. 101. 2. *with a perfect heart.* You shall see this man practising Religion, and Religious Duties, he will see to it, that as *himself*, so his *household shall serve the Lord.* Outward profession of Religion, most will take up, and they will not be accounted of no Religion, but the power of Religion, at that they stumble. There is no better evidence of the truth of Gods grace in the soul, than the Conscionable practice of Domestick, and Private Duties. This is a good approbation of a mans faithfullnesse to God.

But we will propound the Doctrin more general.

That

That it is the Duty of all Parents which desire to have such children as these were, that they do as this *Lady* did, *viz.* Train them up in Religion, and in the Instruction and Information in the Lord, even from their youth. The Scriptures are plentiful in this, both by Precept, and Example. For Precept. *These words, which I command thee this day, thou shalt teach them thy Children.* And again. *He established a testimony in Iacob, and appointed a law in Israel, which he commanded our Fathers that they should make them known unto their Children.* And the Apostle gives it in charge to all Parents, *Ye Fathers, bring up your Children in the Nurture and admonition of the Lord.* And who are to be admitted to the Ministery, but such as *govern well their own houses, and keep their Children in Subjection?*

Doct. Religion to be taught Children betimes. Deu. 6. 6, 7. Ps. 78. 5. Ephe. 6. 4. 1 Tim. 3. 4, 5.

And if we look for Examples, the Scriptures are full, to shew that it hath been the care of Godly and Religious Parents to instruct their Children, and Families, in the Fear and Nurture of the Lord.

Thus did *Adam* teach his sons to Sacrifize. Thus *Eunice* taught *Timothy* from a child. Thus *Abraham taught his Children, and his Servants after him. Ioshua, David,* this *Lady*, and divers other excellent examples have we in the Scripture of the godly care of Parents in teaching, and instructing their Children. And where Parents have been Irreligious, Wicked, and Profane, their children often tread in their steps, and have proved Sons of *Belial*, a blot to their Family, a grief to their Parents, and a Scourge to the Church. As we see in *Ahaziah* that had *Athalia* to his mother.

Gen. 4. Gen. 18. 19. 2 Chron. 22. 3.

Now that this is the Duty of Parents, appeareth by many Reasons.

Reas. 1.

First it is Gods commandement, as we have heard before. Deu. 6. 6, 7. Psal. 78. 5. Ephe. 6. 4. *&c.*

2.

Secondly, Let Parents consider that they are the cause of all the evil in their children. *Behold I was born in iniquity, and in sin hath my Mother conceived me.* A Heathen could say, there are too many causes in a

Psa. 51. 5.

lewd Father, of a lewd child ; 1. The evil nature and disposition of an evil parent. 2. An evil Education.

Now seeing the best of Parents bring so much misery upon their Children by the former, It behoves them to indeavour to plant grace in them, that the curse might be removed, and themselves saved. Otherwise the time will come when their Children will cry out against them, and curse the day in the which they were begotten by them, and say with *Jeremiah*, *Cursed be the man that shewed my Father saying, A child is born unto thee.*

Jer. 20. 15.

3. Thirdly, All other natural affection that parents can shew to their children, without this, is nothing; for admit that parents are at great charge to train them up in learning, to have insight in all Arts and Sciences, and put them into a way to grow rich and mighty in the World, yet still they are wretched creatures, and lye open to the wrath and curse of God. And this is a usuall thing to be observed in the world, that such Parents as have been more careful, to make their Children more great than good, have found the same Children their greatest cross and trouble.

And last of all, God prieth into the wayes of Parents to see how this duty is performed, and accordingly blesseth, or curseth, both them and their children. How greatly was *Abraham* blessed of God, called *the friend of God*? God made him of his privy councel, for this cause amongst the rest, that he so carefully instructed his children. And on the contrary part *Heli*, otherwise a Godly man, yet for his indulgency and cockering of his Sons, these proved a heavy scourge to him at last.

Gen. 18. 19.

1 Sam. 2.

Object. Tush, it is an idle thing to trouble Childrens heads with such a thing as Religion is, matters of Religion are above their capacitie.

Answ. This is no idle or trivial thing: for

1. First, it is *Solomons* observation, *Teach a child in the train of his way, and he will remember it when he is old.*

Pro. 22. 6.

And

And a very Heathen could say, that what liquor is first put into a vessel, it savors of it ever after.

Secondly, Though the capacities of Children be weak and tender, yet we finde that true and accomplished in many of them, *I thank thee O Father, that thou hast hid these things from the wise, and prudent of the World, and hast reveiled them to babes and sucklings.* How many that are but very young, yet are riper in knowledge than the aged? 2. Mat. 11.

Thirdly, Let those that would not have their Children meddle in matters of Religion, look but upon the practice, and Godly Example, of Godly Parents in Scripture, such as are *Abraham, Iosiah, Hanna, Eunice,* this *Lady,* &c. whose great praise and commendation was their Religious Education of their Children. 3.

Vse 1. By the Rule of this Doctrine, we may see, how greatly too blame those Parents are, whose care for their Children extends no further than for the things of this life, how they may thrive in the World, grow Rich, and greater than others, *&c.* But as for that which is the ground of all, Grace, and Religion, they may sink or swim, all is one to them. Canst thou say of thy Children as St. *Austin* said of his Mother *Monica*? It is impossible that a Child of such a Mother, and of so many prayers and tears, should perish.

Are thy Children the Children of thy prayers, and cares? hast thou by thy Godly Example and Practice, laboured to make them good? been an Example to thy Children, of a Godly and Christian life? this is not common amongst us, for Parents to take care of the precious souls of their Children, that they may live for ever: But rather are like the Mother of *Zebedees* Children, who came to Christ with this Petition, *Lord that these my sons may sit, one on thy right hand, the other on thy left,* dreaming of an Earthly Kingdom. But herein lyeth the greatest love that Parents can shew to their Children, to take care of their pretious souls that they may live for ever.

The second use

2. Is a use of *Instruction* to all Parents by this exam of this *Lady*, that they look betimes to the instruct of their Children. God often times calls young one young men, and young women; let Parents th labour to work grace in them betimes, to see the Children young *Timothies*, young *Josiahs*, that when was but eight years old, set himself to seek the Lo so young *Samuels*, young *Jeremias*. Take heed of th Proverb that came from Hell, *A young Saint, and old Devil.* It was never true of any but of the De himself, he indeed was a young Saint, and proved old Devil.

Solomon saith, *Teach a child the train of his way, a he will not depart from it when he is old.* Let not the Parents be negligent and careless of their duties, if tho laboures not to plant grace in thy Children, it is sign that thou hast no grace in thy self.

And oftentimes we see it comes to pass, that P rents indulgence, and cockering of their Childre and not giving them correction betimes, cause many to fall into the hand of the Magistrate to the Parents grief, and their own shame, and so are cut o which by timely correction might have escaped.

Hitherto of the second part, the persons saluted *The Lady and her children.*

Whom I love in the truth, and not I only, but also a that have known the truth, for the truths sake, which dwelleth in us, and shall be with us for ever.

THis is the Second Circumstance at first propounde in the *Preface*, And that is Saint *Iohn* his Testifica tion of his own love, together with the Churches lov towards this *Lady* and her *Children.*

The meaning of the words are in effect, q. d.

This virtuous *Lady* and her *children*, I profess here that I love them *in truth*, Sincerely and unfeignedly

Neither

Neither do I this alone, but all those that are with me, even so many as do know the *truth*. And whence is it that we love them? surely for this cause chiefly, because they profess the same *truth* with us.

Herein doth our Apostle make known his love and good-will towards this *Lady* and her *Children*. And therein labours to draw their love and attention towards him: For how that she might be assured of the Apostles love towards them, she might be drawn the more willingly to imbrace the Doctrine he delivers unto her.

2 Things move regard, and attention: { 1. The worth of the Matter. 2. The love of the Speaker.

In the profession of the Apostles Love, and the Churches, note

1. The person loved, *Whom*, which hath relation to the *Lady* and her *Children*.
2. The persons loving, the *Elder*, and *all that know the truth*.
3. The manner how they loved, *In truth*, without dissimulation.
4. The Reason or Cause why they so loved them, *for the truths sake*.

The first Circumstance to be observed, are the Persons loved, *viz.*

1. The persons loved.

Whom, which are { 1. The *Lady*. 2. Her *Children*.

Quest. These being such kind of persons, so gifted and graced as they were, deserved to be *loved* of the Apostle, and of the Church. But what if this *Lady* and her *Children* had been contrary minded, that they had little or no Religion in them, or had been Enemies to the power of godliness, what love would these have shewed them then?

Ans. I Answer, admit they had been even such, no doubt but they would have loved them; for such is the nature of Christian love, that it loveth not Friends only, but even our very Enemies. And so there is no doubt,

but that the love of this Apostle, and the faithfull of that time, did extend it self to all. Yet so as that they loved this Godly and Religious *Lady*, and her Children in a special manner.

Doct. As we are to love all, So especially the Godly.

So that the Point is, That albeit in Christianity we ought to love all men: Yet more especialy are we bound to love those, in whom we may see God's Image, that they are Virtuous, Religious, and Godly.

But what is this Love the Apostle here speaks of?

Love what?

This Love is defined thus, To be the work of God's Spirit, whereby a man is moved to affect his Brethren for Gods sake.

1. I call it a work of God Spirit, for so doth S.

Gal. 5. 22. *Paul* call it, *The fruit of the Spirit is Love, Ioy, Peace* &c.

2. I add, is moved to affect his Brother, where by Brother we are not simply to understand, the Son of the same Father with us, but all that bear Gods Image.

3. I add, for Gods sake, Because God is principally and first of all to be beloved, And our Brother is to be loved in God, and for God; Now all true Believers are knit together in love, as the members of one body are by nerves and sinews knit together, and all in one head. Thus is it in this Mystical body of the Church. And this is usual in the Scripture, to compare true Believers. Though Believers in the Primitive times were

Acts 4. 32. a multitude, It is said they *were of one heart*, and therefore of one body.

1. True Believers are knit each to other in the bond of *Love*, they have all one and the same Spirit, the same Illuminating Spirit, the same Sanctifying Spirit, the same Spirit of Supplication and Prayer.

2. All true believers are joyned together in Christ by faith, and Christ is said to dwell in their hearts by Faith.

3. They are all knit together in love, being of one

mind

minde, and of one heart, which is called the *Bond of perfection.* These love one another with a pure and hearty love; and hence it is that this duty is so often pressed.

Let brotherly love continue. Love as brethren; and *joyn to Godliness Brotherly kindness* &c. Now that we are thus bound to love our Brother, these Reasons farther shew it. Heb. 13. 1. 1 Pet. 3. 8 2 Pet. 1. 7.

First, We see this in God himself, who is good unto all, And *causeth the Sun to shine upon the just and unjust.* Yet in a more special manner, *God is good to Israel, Even unto such as are of a pure heart.* And so accordingly runs the Commandement to us, *to do good to all, especially to those of the houshold of Faith.* Reas. 1. Ps. 73. 1. Gal. 6. 10.

Secondly, No man can truly love God, which all men profess to do, but he must needs love his children; the Proverb is, Love me, love my Dog, much more my child. It is a vain thing for any man to say that he loveth God, and hateth those that bear the Image of God. 2.

Thirdly, This is a good Argument that we our selves are beloved of God, and are the Disciples of Christ; *By this* (saith Christ) *shall all men know that ye are my Disciples, if ye love one another.* 3.

Fourthly, All the Faithful have all one Father, God, one Mother the Church, one elder Brother Christ, and should not such be knit together in love? 4. Heb. 2. 11

And last of all, they have all the same Provision, wear the same Garment Christ's Righteousness, have the same Dyet, Eat of the same Bread, and Drink of the same Cup, have one and the same Faith, the same Hope, the same Baptism, are reserved for one and the same glorious Inheritance. How ought then Believers to love one another? 5.

Let us Apply this.

This shews the miserable condition of those, that are not, nor will not be knit together in this bond of love. You have many men that can cloze with the World, *Vse* 1.

joyn with Atheists, Papists, be Companions of Drunkards, Prophane Persons, sons of *Belial*, yet will hold no communion at all with Believers, they are so precise, they cannot indure to hear one swear an Oath, to play upon the Sabbath, they are never well till they are talking of points of Religion *&c.* And is this the cause wherefore thou hatest, revilest, and Shunnest their Company? know that *thou savourest not the*
1 Io.3.12. *things that are of God*, But for ought I know carriest about thee a Stigmatical note and brand of a Reprobate; this was *Cains* sin, he hated his Brother, because his Brothers works were Righteous, and his own Wicked. These men are to know, that all this while they can hold fellowship with these, and cannot be brought to be knit to the Brethren in love, they can have no true comfort, or assurance that they have union at all with Christ: For none can have true Union with Christ the Head, that hold not communion with the Members.

2. Secondly, This may serve to provoke all that professe themselves to be the Children of God, to love the Saints and people of God, with this Brotherly love, as we would approve our selves Children of our Heavenly Father. This is Christ's Ear-mark whereby his Sheep are to be known from the stinking Goats of Sathan. *By this shall all men know that ye are my Disciples, if ye love one another.*

There is no man so vile but he professeth to love God, now can a man love God, & delight in God, but will be delighted with his Image wheresoever he sees it?
1 Io.4. 8. *He that loveth him that begat, cannot hate him that is begetter.* whereas *he that loveth not, knoweth not God, for God is love.*

Hitherto of the persons beloved, *Whom.*

2. The persons loving. *Whom I love, and not I only, but also all that have known the truth.*

The

The persons loving we see are both the *Elder*, and not he alone, but also all the Faithful.

q. d. That both himself, and all that knew the *truth*, loved this *Lady* and her *Children*. As for the Acquaintance betwixt them, it skils not, we are to know, that Grace and Religion, loves all that have tasted of them.

The Doctrine is.

That true believers love one another, though they never saw the faces one of another. There is a presence whereby the Saints and People of God, are one with another, though never so farr asunder and distant from each other. All that heard of the Piety, Faith, and Godliness, that was in this *Lady* and her Family, did not only rejoice thereat, but had their hearts knit unto them in love. Saint *Paul* was *absent in the Flesh*, yet present with the Church *in Spirit*; we all know, that a mans body, and a mans mind and spirit may be far disjoyned, the body may be in one place, and the mind in another. The Apostle was a Prisoner at *Rome*, yet his mind was with the Church at *Colloss.* *For though I be absent in the flesh, yet am I with you in spirit, rejoicing and beholding your order, and your stedfast faith in Christ.* And whereas they might object and say, how can you know our state and condition, being so far absent? To this the Apostle answers, That *though he were absent in the flesh, yet he was present in the spirit.*

Doct. True believers love one another though absent.

Col. 2. 5.

And our own experience shews this to be true, that our bodies may be in one place, when our minds are in another. Doth not the Lord himself complain thus, saying, *This people come near unto me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me.* And again, *Son of man? this people come and sit before thee, and hear thy words, but their heart goeth after Covetousness.* Their minds and spirits were not there. Although the Saints and Believers dwell far asunder, though they be different in Estate, different in Country, Language, and the

Esay. 29. 13. Eze. 33. 31.

the like, yet are they of one heart, and of one soul.
Act. 4. 31. *The multitude of believers were of one heart,* &c. And the
Rom. 12. 16. Apostle exhorteth Christians *to be of like affection one towards another.* And great Reason.

Reason. 1. It cost no less to redeem the least, than the greatest.

2. Secondly, We all confess and profess the same Articles of the Christian Faith, where we say *We believe the Communion of the Saints.* Now if there be no way for the Saints to have Communion one with another, but by a bodily presence, how can we hold Communion with them? But the Saints have Communion one with another, and Sympathize one with another, in Weal, and Woe, one member with another, and one Church with another, As *Eliah* said to *Gehezi, Went not my spirit with thee?* So are the spirits of Believers one with another.

3. And lastly, Have not Believers all on God, one Faith, one Baptism, and profess all the same hope of one and the same glorious Inheritance? which shews that they must needs love one another.

Vse 1. Seeing then that there is such a presence in the spirit, though there be an absence in the flesh amongst true Believers; This shews in the first place the happy privilege of Gods people, that after some sort Christ is with us to the end of the World, Absent in body, but present in spirit, so are we with him. And hence
Col. 3. 2. it is that the faithful have their *Conversation in Heaven.* The meaning is, their minds, their hearts, and affections are in Heaven, even when we are Heavenly minded. God loves his Saints so dearly, that he will not live in Heaven without them, How then ought we to love his Servants for his Image that appeareth in them?

2. And Secondly, This should teach us to mind the State of other Churches abroad, and to take heed of that Proverb, *Out of sight, out of mind.* Far be this from Christians, that should put upon them *bowels of love.*

Truly

Truly it is much to be bewailed that our hearts are no more affected with the miseries of the Churches abroad in *Germany*, *France*, *Scotland*, *Ireland*, &c. for here hath God his Church and People. We that profess the Communion of Saints, should hold Communion with these Church, and not be absent in spirit, these Believers that were unacquainted with this *Lady* and her Family, yet were knit to them in the bond of the Spirit, and rejoiced at their Spiritual welfare. And it is but just with God to cast away such petitions that we put up unto him, and to turn his back upon them, when we forget to commend unto him the miseries of others.

All that have known the truth.

THe Apostle having spoken of the Saints and Believers who imbraced the Gospel, and believed in Christ, paraphrastically describeth them in these words, those *that have known the truth.*

Wherein we have divers things to be Considered.
1. That the Gospel and word of God is called *the Truth.*
2. That the Faithful are said to *know the Truth.*
3. That those who *know the Truth*, love the Saints of God.

The Gospel and word of God is calld here *the truth.* 1.

And what can be more excellent in the praise of it, than this, that it is called the *Truth*?

Yet this is not so to be understood, as if nothing were to be holden for *Truth* but only what were written in the Scripture: But the Scripture is called *the truth* κατ ἐξοχην by way of Excellency, or Eminency, as if no other *truth* deserved the name in comparison of this, as carrying the truth with it. So that the point is,

That the holy Scripture and *Word* of God is the most *Doct.*

most Excellent and undoubted *Truth* of God, and of all other *Truths* ought so to be esteemed of us.

The Scripture and word of God the undoubted truth of God.

The words of the Lord are pure words, as the silver tried in the furnace seaven times. Thy truth is from generation to generation. And *thy righteousnes is an everlasting righteousnes, and thy law is truth.* And our Saviour prayeth unto his Father thus, *Sanctifie them through thy truth, thy word is the truth.* And again, *whereof ye have heard before by the word of truth which is the Gospel.* Often in the word are the Scriptures called the *word of truth*, shewing, that there is an infallible certainty in Gods word: whatsoever God hath promised, or whatsoever God hath threatned shall certainly be accomplished.

Ps. 12. 6. Ps. 119. 90. 142. Io. 17. 17. Col. 1. 5.

1. His *Commandements* are all just and true, holy, true, and pure, as he is, *The judgments of the Lord are true, and righteous altogether.*

Ps. 119. 9.

2. His *Predictions* are all true. God promised *that the seed of the Woman should bruise the Serpents head*; And *in the fulnes of time God sent his son made of a Woman*, &c. The prediction was, that *the Scepter should not depart from Juda till Shilo came*, thousands of years after God made this good.

Gen. 3 15. Gal. 4. 4. Gen. 49 10.

3. His *Menaces* and threatnings are all most faithful and true, as we may see in *Hiel* attempting the re-edifying of *Iericо*. The old world found it so, after an hundred and twenty years. *Jerusalem* found it so after forty years after Christ, that had foretold that *one Stone should not be left upon another.*

Josu. 6. 26. 1 Reg. 16 36.

4. His *Promises* are sure of accomplishment, and his faithfulnes appears in all. God made a promise to *Abraham* in his youth, and he accomplished it when he was old. God made *Israel* a promise of deliverance out of *Ægypt*; In the same Night God appointed for their deliverance, *God brought them out with a mighty hand and a stretched out arm.* So that the point is clear and plain, that the word is the word of *truth*, and will not fail; and it must needs be so, if we consider, but

Exo. 12. 41.

First,

First, Who it is that speaketh in the word; not man that is deceitful, but God himself that cannot ly, nor recalleth that which is once gon out of his lips, who is *yea and Amen*, of a constant Nature and Changeth not. Rest. 1.

As God is unchangeable in his Nature, so is he unchangeable in his Will, he is not like unto man that willeth a thing to day, and nilleth the same to morrow, but as *Iob* shews, *He is of one minde, and who can turn him?* Beside, he is wisdom it self, and ordereth all things so that nothing can cross his purpose and counsel. 2. Iob. 23. 13.

Thirdly, Besides all this, he is of power able to effect what is the purpose of his own will. Man many times promiseth, and wanteth power to perform, and threatneth, and wanteth might, but it is otherwise with God, who hath all power in his hand, and hath all Creatures in Heaven and in Earth at command. 3.

Is then the Scripture and word of God the undoubted *truth* of God? What spirit then rules in our people called *Quakers*? that call the Scripture an Inky letter, & our Preachers of the Gospel, preachers of the letter, that will not *to the Law, nor to the Testimonies*, as the rule of life, but fly to the light within, as if Christ and his Spirit were divided, and the Spirit and the Scripture did clash each upon the other. Is Christ our teacher? and hath he promised *to lead us into all truth*, and doth he teach us all without book? Surely Christ had never such Scholars since he gave his Church the Scripture to teach them. Did not Christ himself teach out of the Scripture, and teach by the Scripture? Doth not the Scripture Accuse and Judge under Christ and for Christ? *Ye have one that accuses you even Moses.* And *the word that I have spoken the same shall judge you at the last day.* Is not the Scripture one of those books that shall be opened at the last day, as well as the book of Conscience, and the book of Gods Decree? and shall not all be judged then according to the things written in these books? By what Spirit then are these men Use 1. Ioh. 5. 45. Ioh. 12. 48. Rev. 20.

men led, that so slightly esteem of the Scripture, this word of *truth*, which at the last day shall be judged by it whether they will or no? *God shall judge the secrets of all hearts by my Gospel*, saith *Paul*. If then we shall be judged by the Scripture, great reason that our actions should be squared by the Scripture. *The waies of the Lord are upright, and the just shall walk in them.* But as St. *Paul* tells *Elymas*, *these men cease not to pervert the straight waies of God.*

Hos. 14. 9. Act. 13. 10

2. Secondly, Seeing the Scripture and word of God are the undoubted *truth* of God, In what condition then are all wicked and ungodly men, that lye under the menaces and threatnings of the word? the word is the word of *truth*, and God will certainly accomplish what he hath therein threatned. Doth the word reprove thee for thy Drunkennesse, Swearing, Prophanesse, *&c?* Why it is God himself that doth reprove thee. Doth the word threaten and reprove thee for thy sin? It is the *lion* of the *Tribe* of *Iuda* roars, and shall the *lion roar, and shall not the beasts of the forest tremble?* Oh if men did but consider that the word is the word of *truth*, they would not slight the Menaces and Threatnings of the word, as now they do. Tush say they, God forbid that all should be so as the Preachers say, what is this but to say? God forbid that the word is *true*, or that God should be true in his word. Therefore fear and tremble you that lye under the threatnings of the word, remember that it is the word of *truth*, and the Lord will make the word good to thee, and upon thee. And this I say, and I say it again, that it were better for thee that all the Devils in hell did spit fire in thy face, than justly to lye under the condemnation of this word: for God will certainly find a time for the accomplishment of the same, the word is the word of *truth*.

Oh the misery of a poor sinner that lies under the Curses of the word, he is sure one day to partake of them.

And

And O that wicked men would see their Happiness in this, that that day is not yet come upon them, but that they have yet time to Repent, and get from under the Curse, and Judgment threatned: That they would but consider that God doth yet afford them the time of Grace, which being trifled away and misspent, there will be no time of Repentance, though they seek it with tears.

And thirdly, and lastly, as this affords terror unto all wicked and ungodly men, So it yields matter of unspeakable comfort to Believers, for upon this they may stay themselves in a comfortable expectation of all those glorious promises that God hath made unto them in his word, that this word is the word of *truth*. 3.

How many promises hath the Lord allready accomplished, that neither the World, nor all the power of Sathan, or Hell it self, with all the malice of wicked men were able to frustrate and make voyd? And shall it not be so touching those that are yet to be accomplished?

Now is the time wherein the spirits of the Saints are much dejected and cast down, we see somthing, we fear more, but where are our hearts, and where is our faith? Is not the word the word of *truth*, and is he not *truth* it self that hath said, *the gates of hell shall not prevail against the Church*? What though *Gebal* and *Ammon*, and *Amaleck*, plot and combine together, and say of Religion, *Down with it, Down with it, even to the ground*, Is there not that God in Heaven that laughs the *counsel of the Heathen to scorn*? Hath not the Church in all ages of it been that *heavy Stone*, that those that have lifted at it have been bruised to peeces? let us rest upon this, that the word is the word of *truth*, and it shall prevail. Mat. 16. Ps. 2. Zach. 12. 3.

Even so shall it be touching those promises that are yet unaccomplished, such as are

1. The calling of the Jews

2. The

2. The overthrow of Antichrist.
3. The Resurrection of our Bodies.
4. The comming of Christ to judgment.

These are yet to come, only the word doth assure us that these shall come, and the word is the word of *truth*. *And every vision is for his appointed time.* And Heaven and Earth shall sooner pass away than one jot or tittle of the word fail.

All that have known the truth.

2. The faithful know the truth.

The Second is, that the faithful are said to *know the truth*. Wherein that our Apostle would have us to conceive, that the Faith and Religion that they professed was grounded upon the word; whence we learn.

Doct. Knowledge the ground of Faith.

That knowledge is the ground of Faith, and there can be no true, and sound Faith, where sound knowledge of the word and Gospel of Christ is wanting.

Io. 6. 69.

Saint *Peter* joyns these two together, *we believe and know that thou art Christ.* Whence observe, that he yeildeth this for a Reason why he and the rest of the Apostles believed in the Lord Christ. And hence is it,

1 Thes. 1. 13.

that *Faith is* called the *Faith* of *truth*, because it is grounded upon knowledge of the truth, *through Sanctification of the Spirit and the word of truth.*

Rom. 10 14. Psal. 9. 10. 1 Tim. 2. 4.

And this is implied in that of *Paul*, *How shall they believe on him on whom they have not heard?* And *David* also clears this truth, saying, *they that have known thy name shall trust in thee.* Yea, if Salvation it self be necessary, then is *Knowledge* necessary. *God would have all men to be saved.* But it may be demanded how this may be. It is answered, and to come *to the knowledge of the truth.* There is no truth more clear in Scripture than this, that knowledg of the truth is the ground of Faith. See Esa. 27. 11. 2 Pet. 1. 8. Rom. 14. 5. Col. 2. 2. 2 Pet. 3. 18. 1 Cor. 14. 20. Ioh. 7. 49.

Reas. 1.

The Judgment must first be rightly informed, before the heart can be brought to believe. And hence it

is

is it that we are so often pressed and called upon, *Be not unwise, but understand what the will of the Lord is*, And, *Brethren, be not Children in understanding, but in understanding be ye perfect men.* Whereas *Solomon* saith, *He that refuseth instruction despiseth his own Soul.* Ephe. 5. 17. 1 Cor. 14. 20. Pro. 15. 32.

Secondly, As *Christ* saith, *I am the way, the truth, and the life*; And there is no Salvation to be had but in this *way*, and by this *truth*, and through *Christ*, which is our life. And the *Church*, without which there is no salvation, is often in the Gospel called *the kingdome of Heaven.* And the promise runs thus, *the people that dwell there*, that is in the Church, *shall have their sins forgiven*, as if no salvation could be expected (ordinarily) out of the Church. 2. Mat. 13. 44. 47. Esay 33. 24.

Thirdly, This knowledge in the *truth* will keep a man from Seduction, and from Danger of falling away from the *truth*: for what kind of people do Seducers ordinarily prevail withall; and lead Captive, but *Silly women that never came to the knowledge of the truth*? and frothy young Heads that having attained a little knowledge in Religion, and are able to discourse of the Word and Scripture, are puffed up with pride of their Gifts, and Parts, and so are easily Seduced? And this comes to pass for want of being Rooted, and Grounded, and Established in the *truth*. 3. 1 Tim. 3. 6. 7.

Seeing then that knowledge is the true ground of Faith. And that there can be no sound Faith, where sound knowledge of the Word and Gospel is wanting; What then shall we think of that Implicit faith of the Papists, who teach, that it is enough for Salvation, to believe as the Church believeth? That they profess themselves *Catholique*, and live and dy in that profession, it is enough for Salvation. Thus are poor souls kept hoodwinkt from the knowledge of this *truth*, and so must needs want Faith. *Use.*

Secondly, This serves for the just reproof of many amongst us, that notwithstanding the plentiful means 2.

of knowledge we have in our times, the like I believe our Church never enjoyed, Yet the Common Faith of the Common Professant is no better than presumption. How many are there that boast of their Faith, and yet remain in gross ignorance even of the very fundamentals of Religion? by which means Sathan carries many thousands to Hell. To these may be applied that
Hos. 3. 12. which the Lord saith, *I have written to them the great things of the law, but they are accounted a strange thing.* But let men account what they will of themselves, God judgeth otherwise of them, that these do but in effect
Iob 21. 14, 15. say unto God *depart from us, we desire not the knowledge of thy waies.* O that such would consider seriously of these Scriptures,
2 Cor. 4. 3, 4. *If our Gospel be hid, it is hid to those that are lost in whom the God of this World hath blinded their minds.*

And again,

2 Thes. 1. 7, 8. *The Lord Iesus shall shew himself from Heaven with his mighty Angels, in flaming fire, rendring vengeance unto them that do not know God, and which do not obey the Gospel of our Lord Iesus Christ.*

The Lord knows that the greatest sort of our people are in no better case than those *Samaritans* were,
Ioh. 4. 22. of whom Christ saith, *ye worship ye know not what.* Their worship was according to the custom of the place wherein they lived; so are most men led by custom, they would not be accounted *Atheists* or men without all Religion, and hence is it that they retain a form, and to hear the Common-prayer-book read they think it sufficient to bring them to Heaven, as to hear the most powerful Sermons. What is this but
Pro. 28. 29. to hate knowledge? And such shall one day *seek mercy, but shall not find it.*

3.

Hos. 4. 6. And last of all, seeing knowledge is the ground of Faith, And where there is not knowledge *the people perish*, How then doth this concern all, as they tender their everlasting welfare, and happiness, to labor for this knowledge of the *truth*, and acquaint our-

selves

selves with the word of *truth*. That we bless God for our *Teachers*, that they are not yet removed into corners, but that the voice of the *truth* is yet heard amongst us, and whilst we injoy this mercy to make the right Use. *When the Bridegroom shall be taken away,* Christ tells us, *Then shall be the time of Mourning.* O that we were wise to make the right use of our time! And *walk while we have light, Before darkness come upon us.* Our Reading, Conference, Meditation, and Prayer, are all of them excellent means to attain the knowledg of *truth*. Mat. 9. 15. Io. 12. 23.

And not only I, but all that have known the truth.

Our Apostle having testified his own love to this *Lady* & her *Children*, makes mention of the *love* also of those Believers that either knew them, or had heard of the grace of God in them, teaching, *viz.*

That those that *know the truth*, love the Saints of God.

There were no doubt amongst these believers that never saw the faces of this *Lady* nor her *Children*, yet hearing of their Piety, Zeal, and Godliness, their hearts were knit unto them in holy Love.

It is a thing very remarkable, that amongst all the Pen-men of the holy *Scripture*, none speaketh more of *Love*, than this our Apostle doth, And who more beloved than this Disciple was? and was therefore called *the Beloved Disciple*, or the Disciple whom Jesus loved above all the rest, And as he tasted of Gods special love towards himself, he manifests the same in pressing this Duty upon others. *God is love* (saith he) *and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him. And hereby* (saith Christ) *shall all men know that ye are my Disciples if ye love one another.* And this love to the Brethren St. *John* makes an infallible mark that we are translated from Death to Life. And thus *David* expresseth his love, to whom? but to the Saints; 1 Io. 4. 16. John 14. 1 Io. 3. 14.

3. That those that know the truth doe love the Saints of God.

Doct. Those that know the truth love the Saints of God

Ps. 16. 3. *All my delight is in the Saints*; he speaks indefinitely, that his delight was not in one or two, but *in all the Saints.*

Object. 1. But are the Saints only to be Beloved of us?

Ans. To this I answer, *As God is good unto all*, but Especially *he is God to Israel*: So should our love and good-

Psal. 145. 9 ness be extended to all, but Especially *to the houshold*

Gal. 6. 10 *of Faith.* We are bound to love all men in Respect of Gods Image in them, and upon them, but Especially such as have Gods Image renewed in them; there is and ought to be a different degree of love; but yet

Mat. 5. love must be shewed to all. *Love* (saith Christ) *your Enemies, pray for them that hate you, and persecute you,*

Object 2. &c.

But how shall I know that my love to the Saints is such a love as is a true manifestation of Gods love to me?

Answ. I answer, When I shall look upon a man, not as a man only, but as a good man who hath Gods Image upon him, *Saints by Calling*, one that *Excelleth* in *Virtue*, When my heart is knit to such a one, not for any by Respect, but for Gods sake, and goodness sake, though I never look to reap any penny benefit by this man, yet my heart is knit unto him, as more Excellent than his Neighbour, this is *Brother-*

2 Pet. 1. 7. *ly kindness*, and a good Testimony of Gods love to and in me.

But why must those that love the *truth* love the *Saints*?

Reas. 1. First, Because the Lord himself hath dearly loved such. Hath he not given his Son for these? Hath he not given them his own Spirit? Hath he not provided a Heaven, a Crown of Glory for such for ever with himself at last, and shall not these be loved of us?

2. Secondly, Are not the *Saints* the Lords own Heritage? Hath he not promised that he that shall give a Cup of cold water to one of these *in the name of a*

Disciple

Disciple, shall not lose his reward? Doth not the Lord account what is done to these, as done to himself? And on the contrary, that he that *toucheth these toucheth the Apple of his Eye.* And do not these deserve our love? Zach 2.3.

3. And last of all, The benefit that true Believers reap by holding Communion with the Saints may provoke to this Duty of love, God gives us the benefit of all their gifts, and graces, we are warmed by them, our Judgments better informed, our inward peace and comfort the more setled, and we the more strengthned, both to resist evil, and to walk in good Duties. Surely if there be a Heaven upon Earth, it is in the *Communion of Saints*, and such must needs love one another.

Vse 1. Seeing this is so, that those that savingly know the *truth*, love those that love the *truth*, In what a sad condition then are they in, who have not this love in them? who have neither love to God nor his Children, but are indeed and in truth Enemies to them both? Many made profession of Christ, and went under the name of Christians, and Believers, in the Apostles time, yet were indeed *Enemies to Christ.* Phil. 3.18 Have we not those amongst us that make Religion the very cause of their hatred and malice against the Godly, that have nothing else to object, but that they are so pure and precise that they cannot love them? Oh the sad condition that such men are in! this is the very sin of *Cain*, and so of a Reprobate, to hate another for good, such have the very mark of the Devil stamped upon them. 1 Io. 3. 12

2. Secondly, If those that love the *truth*, and those that profess the *truth*, are thus knit together in love to the *Saints*, such may take incomparable comfort hence, for such may be assured they have Christ in them, if this love be in them, Christ is in them, and his Spirit which is the Spirit of *love* is in them, though the *World lieth in wickedness*, and lives in Envy, Hatred,

and malice, against Christ and his members, yet in these the Prince of the World is cast out, and they have the Spirit of Christ in them, one principal fruit whereof is *love*, which may comfort the hearts of the Godly, when the graceless World doth most of all molest and trouble them.

In Truth

3. The manner how they loved, *in Truth* without Dissimulation.

Here we have the manner how St. *John*, with the rest that sent salutation to this *Lady* and her *Children*, testified their love unto them, It was *in Veritate*, in *truth*, not in any Flattering or Complemental way, or in a Dissembling manner, but it proceeded from their hearty and unfeigned love towards them.

Doct. The love of Christian must be in truth. 1 Io. 3 18. Rom. 12. 9 1 Pet. 1. 22. Ephe. 5. 2. 1 Sam. 18.

Hence we are taught, that the love of Christians one towards another must be in *truth*, hearty & unfeigned, free from Hypocrisy, Flattery, and Dissimulation. *Let us not love* (saith our Apostle) *in word*, or *in tongue only, but in deed and in truth*, and *let love be without Dissimulation*, and St. *Peter* exhorteth to the same Duty, thus, *love one another with pure and hearty love, fervently.* Yea we are Exhorted *to love one another as Christ loved us.* Now Christ's love to us was not like the love of *Iudas* to him, *all hale* in the mouth, and all malice and dissimulation in the heart. But like *Ionathans* love to *David*, love in the mouth, and health in the heart. *Ionathan did love David as his own soul.* How earnest is the Apostle in pressing this Duty of hearty love *If there be therefore any Consolation in Christ, any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any Compassion and Mercy, fulfill my joy, that ye be like minded, having the same love, being of one accord and of one judgment.* And the ground of all this is layed down, *There is one Body and one Spirit.*

Phi. 2. 1, 2. Ephe. 4. 4.

Act. 4. 32.

And of the Primitive Church, which was the purest Church, it is thus recorded, *the multitude of them that believed were of one heart.* And often times are we exhorted in the word to be of *one minde, and of one Spirit.* and that from this ground, that we are *one Body.* As we

we see in a natural body there is no rent nor division amongst the members of it, but one member serves for the good of another, for the benefit of the Whole, so ought it to be in this mystical body. And great Reason.

Reas. 1. First, Christians and true Believers are as one Soul in two bodies, and ought to be of one heart, and of one minde. A very Heathen could say, all things are Common amongst Friends. And besides, though Believers are a multitude, yet they are but one body under one head Christ, and were it not monstrous to have two hearts in one body?

2. Secondly, This is a true note of true love, that it seeketh not it own good, the love that aimeth at it self, is but self love.

Vse 1. Seeing the love of Christians must be in *truth* hearty, Unfeigned, without Dissimulation, let the first use be for triall, whether we have in us this love of Gods Children yea or no. And the rather, because there are so many that deceive themselves in this particular.

Object. But how shall I know that my love to Gods Children is in Truth and Sincerity?

Answ. I Answer, If thou loveſt Gods Children in *truth*, it is not for carnal ends & by respects, because such are friendly, kinde, beneficial, &c. But thou eyest in them the gifts and graces of God that shine in them, as Saint *Iohn* did the Elect *Lady* here.

2. Secondly, Where this love is sincere, in truth, and unfeigned, it knits the heart of a Believer, even to such as are strangers unto them, whose faces they never saw, yet they hear and are perswaded of the *Faith*, *Love*, *Zeal*, and *Godliness*, that they hear to be in others; their hearty affection is kindled towards them, yea they would live and dye with such. This is a good sign that love is sincere.

3. Thirdly, if thy love to the Saints be *true*, and unfeigned, thou wilt then prize their company and communion, and say with *David*, *All my delight is in thy*

Saints that are in the Earth, and such as excel in virtue.

Psa. 16.3. These thou delightest to have communion withall, to receive into thy house & Family, affinity, marriage, &c.

4. And last of all, it is a good sign that that mans love is true and unfeigned, that extendeth it self to the whole *houshold of Faith*, to all that have the Image of God upon them, be they rich, or poor, when a man shall make *Grace* and *Religion* the common ground of love to all, though there may be different degrees of this love, that one Believer may be beloved more than another, Yet where love is unfeigned it will be expressed towards all Saints, let their Condition be what it will be.

Vse. 1. This meets with that apish, and fond practice of the greatest, and commonest sort of men in our daies, such as place all their love in outward gestures, and complements, stooping with hat and hand down to the ground, with *your servant Sir*, and such like, saying with *Ioab* to *Amaza*, *my Lod*, when there is *fel in corde*, gall and bitterness in the heart, what is this but a fawning, feigned dissimulation, which God abhorrs, and is farr from this *love in the truth*?

2. Secondly, This serves for our *Instruction* to labour to get this true, hearty, and unfeigned love amongst our selves. It is a badge of our Profession, and Religion, the members of Christs body ought to be of one heart and minde. The Lord Jesus the head of this body the Church, did so manifest his love to his Church his body, that he thought not his own blood too dear for it, but shed his blood to redeem his Church; how ought we then to love one another? If we love not one another, it is a plain evidence that man loves not Jesus Christ, for Christ will have us shew our love to him, by loving his members. And hence is it that Christ

Ioh. 21. 15. saith to *Peter*, *Simon, Simon, lovest thou me? feed my Lambs.* q. d. Shew thy love to me, by shewing thy love to them. And thus *David* manifested his love to God, by manifesting his love to the Saints, *My righteousness*

Ps. 16 3. *cannot extend to thee but to thy Saints.*

By

By what spirit then are those men led that divide from their Brethren, that hate where they should love, that are ever stirring up of strife, division and dissention amongst the Brethren? I would ask these men one question, if ever they can bring an instance or example (unless the man were mad) that did ever hate or hurt his own body; the very light of nature teacheth the members of the same body to love and tender one another. *No man ever hated his own flesh but nourished it and cherished it.* O how much then do such men degenerate from the law of Nature and of Grace, that hate the members of the same body? 3. Eph. 5. 29.

And within the compass of this Reproof come such as go about to divide the seamless Coat of Christ by sowing of Schism and Heresies in the Church, what is this but to divide the body of Christ? O that such would remember that place of *Paul*, *Now I beseech you Brethren mark them which cause Division, and Offences, contrary to the Doctrine which ye have received, and avoyd them, for they are such as serve not the Lord Jesus Christ but their own bellies.* The very hatred and malice that some bear to the Saints and members of Christ, doth manifest they are not members of this body. Rom. 16. 17.

V. 2.

For the truths sake which dwelleth in us, and shall be in us for ever.

HEre the word *truth* is taken in a large sense, *viz.* For that knowledge of God and other heavenly graces which were in this *Lady* and her *Children*.

They loved them no doubt in other respects, as in respect of Gods Image, and in respect of humanity we owe one to another, and the law of Nature, which requires love to all. But the greater bond of love, that drew their hearts and tyed their affections together, was Religion, Piety, and Godliness which they saw to be in this *Lady* and her *Children*. The Doctrine is

Though

Doct. The truest love is for pietie sake.

Though one may, and must love another in many respects, and for many reasons, yet is that the truest love, when one loveth another for Piety and Religion sake. Yea one of the Antients thinks, that howsoever there may be great acquaintance & familiarity betwixt man and man, yet there can be no true friendship if they be not joyned together in one Faith. That man can hardly be a true friend to any, that is not a friend to the *truth*.

Reas. And the Reason is, because Religion is the surest, and the strongest bond: It makes one a member of another, whereas other bonds are easily broken.

Vse. Which shews the Difference betwixt worldly friendship, and true Christian love, in the World we may find many that make much one of another, Inferiours profess much love and kindness to their Superiours, the Poor to the Rich, whilst one expects kindness from another there wants not profession of love, but an Apple may win them, and an Apple will lose them. But that love is true when they are knit together in the bond of the Spirit, This is pefect love.

Which dwelleth in us, and shall be in us for ever.

The works of grace in these Godly persons is here further described.

1. From that which it is for the present, *It Dwelleth in us.*

2. From that it shall be hereafter, *It shall be with us for ever.*

First, From that it is for the present, *It dwelleth in us.*

The word *Dwel* is a *Metaphor* borowed from Houshold entertainment, and doth import how familiar the word should be with us, and we with it. Hence we may observe in general, before we handle the Chief point, *viz.* The honorable Testimony that Saint *Iohn* gives of this *Lady* and her *Children*, what they are, they

they were such that gave that entertainment to the word that it *Dwelled in them.* And this he publisheth to the World, even the gracious work of God in them.

Whence we learn,

Doct. Men must be commended for their virtues as Condemned for vice.

As well to commend men for their virtues and good things that are in them, as to reprove them for their faults; this is usual with the Apostles when they write to the Churches, first to take notice of their virtues, and commend them for the same, and then to condemn them for their vices. Thus Christ himself dealeth with the Churches of *Asia*, as with the Church of *Ephesus*, whom Christ commendeth for their *Labour, and Patience, and that they could not bear with them that were Evil &c. Nevertheless* (saith Christ) *I have something against thee, because thou hast lost thy first love.* And thus is the Angel of the Church of *Pergamus* commended by Christ for keeping the Faith even where Sathans throne was. Yet reproves them sharply for suffering such as maintained the Doctrine of the *Nicholaitans*, And he wishes them to *Repent*, or else he would come against them shortly. And thus in Scripture are many Saints commended for their virtues, when their vices are not concealed, as we may see in *Sara* reproved for her laughing, yet commended for her Faith, and *Iob* for his patience, though he had in him much impatiency.

Rev. 2. 2. v. 4. Rev. 2. 11 15.

Reas. 1. 2.

And herein we glorifie God who is the Author of every grace, and also provoke our Brethren to go on in well doing, when they shall see that others take notice of their godliness.

Vse. 1

Which serves to reprove their folly and Sin, that are ever prying into the defects of the Brethren, wherein they are Eagle-eyd, and in the mean time overlook all their graces. This was *Cams* sin, who soon espied the nakedness of his Father, and therein made himself merry, not considering that *Noah* was his Father, nor any wise regarding those excellent graces that were in him.

The

The World abounds with such People in our daies, that like flyes light upon sores, any thing that may open their mouths to disgrace Religion they take notice of in the Godly, but any thing praise-worthy they will not see.

2. Secondly, This serves for our *Instruction*, that we labour to reform in our selves this common evil amongst us, and learn to give to every man his due, Honor to whom honor, Praise to whom praise is due; the best gold must have its alowance, and none are to be looked upon as perfect here till we come to be cloathed upon.

Yet in our praising of others, these Cautions must be observed.

1. The Persons whom we commend must be well known to us to be worthy of our commendations, it must not be don out of affection and partiality.
2. To what end? It must be for a good end, as that God may be glorified for his gifts, and the party more incouraged in well doing.
3. How farr it may be done, Sparingly, not lavishly beyond the truth.

Which Dwelleth in us.

This is a Metaphorical kind of speech taken from Housekeepers, for he that lodgeth but for a night or two in a house, and then departeth, we account him but a stranger: But the man that makes his aboad there he is the *Dweller*. And this phrase of Speech implies three things.

1. That the Word should be Familiar unto us, we should be Familiarly acquainted with the word, as Pro. 7. 4 *Say unto Wisdom thou art my Sister.*
2. It should be *Domestical*, It must be got into our houses as well as into our Churches, for there we shall meet with Sathans temptations, and there we shall stand in need of the benefit of the Word.

3. This

3. This Metaphor shews that this Word must constantly be entertained, not by fits and starts, when men are in a good mood &c. but it must Constantly be conversed withall.

So that the chief Instruction here hence is,

That it is not enough for a man to believe the Word to be true, to hear the Word taught upon the Sabbath, or to shew some good affection to the Word, But this *Word* and *Truth* must dwell with us as an housholder, And have its constant abode with us, and be Familiar with us. Such as are of the same Family, cannot be strangers one to another, but they Converse daily together, and are most intimate one with another. So ought we to be with the Word, This is pressed by the Apostle, *Let the Word of God dwell with you in all Wisdom* &c. What meaneth *Solomon* to exhort us *To bind Instruction of Wisdom upon our fingers*, But to shew how Familiarly we ought to be acquainted with the Word? And thus doth *Moses* press the Children of *Israel* saying, *These words which I command thee this day, shall be in thy heart, and thou shalt reherse them continually to thy Children, and shalt talk of them when thou tarriest in thy house, and as thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. And thou shalt binde them as a sign upon thy hand, and they shall be as a frontlet between thy eyes, and thou shalt write them upon the posts of thy house, and upon thy gates*, But as to shew us, that the Word must dwell with us, and that we ought to be most Familiarly acquainted with it. And thus the Apostle exhorts the Colossians *that they be rooted, grounded, and established in the truth.* All which places serve to press us to this duty, and to teach us how Familiarly we ought to be acquainted with the Word.

Doct. The word must dwell with us.

Col. 3. 16. Pro. 7. 8.

Deut. 6. 6, 7, 8.

Col. 1. 23.

And great Reason.

First, There is no true comfort to be found in any thing but in the *Word*. *This is my comfort* (saith *David*) *in my affliction thy word hath comforted me*, and *I had*

Reas. 1.

Ps. 119. 50.

perished

perished in my affliction had it not been for thy word. But now I will never forget thy word, &c. When in time of trouble men know not where to turn themselves for Comfort, the Word can do it. Whereas wicked and ungodly men that all their life time have been strangers to the *Word*, must needs be at their wits end when fear cometh upon them.

2. Secondly, It is the Word that must be consulted withall; in all our actions and undertakings, as our Counseller. There is nothing to be taken in hand but by warrant from the Word: for *whatsoever is not of Faith is sin*. And it is the Word, that is the *Word of Faith*.

3. Thirdly, It is the Word that is the means of Sanctifying of the Creatures that we dayly make use of, *All things are Sanctified by the Word and Prayer*. Yea every common mercy and blessing God bestows upon us, proceeds from Gods left hand, and comes not as a Blessing, but as a Curse, any further than the same is Sanctified unto us by the *Word* and *Prayer*.

Vse 1. This ministereth unto us occasion to bewail the misery of many Persons, Families, and Parishes, that either want the Word, or make not the right use of it if they have it.

1. How many men have we amongst us, yea and Families, that howsoever they make a profession of Religion, and would not be looked upon as openly prophane, and they or theirs can read, and happily some have a Bible in their houses, yet this lies from weeks end, to weeks end, untouched, yea the Spider many times spins her webs over it? This is to have the Word a stranger to us, and not to dwell with us, seldom read one Chapter, have no acquaintance with the Word, but rather contemn and despise it. O that such would consider upon these four fearfull judgments that wait upon them.

4. Fearful Judgments upon contemners of the Word.

1. First, That all the comforts of the World are unto these men as a clapsed and sealed book, so as that

Word

Word which unto the Godly and believing soul, is the fountain of all true joy and comfort, is unto these men no comfort at all, but rather the messenger of Death.

Secondly, When men prize not the Word, have no delight in it, nor feel no comfort in it, This is a just judgment of God upon them that *they are often slain by the word of Gods mouth.* 2. Esay. 29. 11.

Thirdly, Whatsoever good thing else may be seen in these men commendable, be it moral virtue, Charity &c. the same is vile, and odious in Gods sight. 3.

Fourthly. *Salvation is farr from the wicked, because they keep not thy law.* Psa. 119. 155.

And this is not only the misery of many persons and Families, but whole Parishes, and Congregations, that want the saving Ministry of the Word amongst them, these people live in blindness and darkness, and walk in continual danger. Such live without the ordinary means of life and salvation. These want the bread of life, and therefore must needs starve and perish, for *where prophesying fails the people perish.* It was a heavy judgment when Christ said to the Disciples, *Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into the Cities of the Samaritans see that ye enter not.* Where God vouchsafeth not this mercy of a faithful Ministry it is a fearful sign of Gods indignation. And surely for unthankfulness and unfruitfulness the Lord is justly provoked to remove the Word from a people. 4. Mat. 10. 8.

Secondly, This serves for *instruction* to all, that as we desire comfort in life, and death, to give the Word intertainment in our houses: but especially in our hearts. It is the *Word* that must be our stay and comfort in all times of straights, and dangers. Sickness will come, Death will come, what is it that must support us that we sink not in the time of trial and adversity, but the Word? *I had perished in my affliction* (saith *David*) *had it not been for thy Word. But now I will not forget thy Word, for by it hast thou quickned me.* One short sen- 2. Ps. 119.

tence

tence remembred when we lye upon our death bed will yield more comfort to a distressed Soul, than all the world besides. And therefore now in the time of health and peace we should *Meditate* in it, treasure up the comforts of it, which will be our comfort at last. This was the greatest commendation of this Lady and her *Children*, That for the present, *The Word Dwelled* in them.

2. *It shall be with us for ever.*

From what it shall be hereafter.

In these words our Apostle shews the blessed fruit and effect that followes such as receive the *truth* in Sincerity, which are the members of Jesus Christ, in this, that those saving graces which the Lord hath bestowed upon them, He will never totally take them away from them. For so much is implied in these words *It shall be with us for ever:*

Doct. A true Christian shall never totaly fall from grace.

The Doctrine is,

That that man that hath once in him, the true saving knowledge of the truth of the Gospel: By the power whereof he is regenerate, and become the child of God; such a one shall never after totally and finally fall from grace.

Cautions.

In the handling of this Doctrine, these Cautions are first to be premised.

1. 1. That though it be a truth that no Godly Christian can totally fall away from grace, but true grace *abides in them for ever*, yet all have not the like measure of grace: And according to their measure received so is their *faith* and *assurance*, the seed received in the good ground brings not forth fruit in all alike. It is the truth of grace, and not that measure that saves us.

Mat. 13. 23.

2. Secondly, In the most Sanctified Soul there is, and will be doubts and fears; *I believe, Lord help my unbelief.* Peter had faith, when he began to sink, yet Christ caught him by the hand and said,

Mar. 9. 24

O thou of little faith, wherefore doubtest thou? Mat. 14. 31.

Thirdly, This comfort and assurance is not felt of true believers at all times: But sometimes their comfort and assurance is up, at another time it is down; as we may see in *David*, *though I walk in the shaddow of death I will fear no evil*; here his faith is on wing, and he seems to be more than a man: but at another time he is cast down as low, *Fear and trembling hath taken hold upon me.* 3. Ps 23. 4. Ps. 55. 5.

Fourthly, Such as have the greatest comfort, and assurance of the work of Grace in their hearts, may, yea ought, to fear, for by this our Salvation is wrought out. 4. Phil. 2. 12.

These Cautions thus premised, the Doctrine will remain sure, That that Man that hath once attained to the saving knowledg of the *truth*, and is truly regenerate and ingraffed into Christ, will never totally and finally fall away from this Grace, *But shall abide in him for ever.* The Scripture is clear in this. See that promise made to *Peter*, and in him to the whole Church, that *The gates of hell shall never prevail*, our Saviour likewise foretelling that *many false prophets shall arise and deceive many, even if it were possible the very Elect*, Implyeth thus much, that the Elect shall not be deceived. And again, *My sheep hear my voyce, and they follow me, And no man taketh them out of my hands.* And I *am perswaded* (saith *Paul*) *that neither death, nor life, nor Angels, nor Principalities, nor powers, &c. nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.* And *whom he loveth, to the end he loveth them.* And *the gifts and calling of God are without repentance.* And Christ further cleareth this truth in that saying of His to his Disciples, *I have chosen you, and ordained you, that you should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain.* See 1 Pet. 3. 4. Psal. 19. 9. Luk. 10. 42. See more of this in *Henderſham* on *John*, pag. 333. Mat. 16. 18. Mar. 24. 24. Joh. 10. 27. Rom. 8. 38. Ioh 13. 1. Rom. 11. 29. Ioh. 15. 16.

But here ariseth two objections. First from

Scripture. Secondly from Experience.

Object. 1. Ezek. 18. 24. From Scripture, That place in *Ezekiel, If the Righteous turn from his Righteousness, and commit iniquity &c. in the sin that he hath committed he shall dye.* Where it seems that a Righteous man may fall finally.

Answ. I answer, of Righteous men there are two sorts; 1. Outward Righteous before men. 2. Truly Righteous before God.

A man may appear outward Righteous before men, and partake of many excellent common gifts and graces, that very neer resemble the graces of the Spirit themselves, as Wisdom, Knowledge, Prayer &c. And yet from these he may fall away; And the reason is, because they were but common gifts, and not Sanctified graces. The Hearers that are compared to the stony ground, and thorny ground, went far this way, yet fell away. And it is of such common gifts and graces that the Apostle speaketh, that some have been partakers of, yet fall away, that *it is impossible* Heb. 6. 4. 6. *for them to be renewed by repentance*: but these had never the work of true saving grace in them, they never 2 Thes. 2. 10. *received the truth in love of the truth.* These never heard Rev. 3. 1. the word *with honest and good hearts*: at the very best they had but a name to be alive, but were dead.

Object. 2. Doth not experience also shew us, that many that have professed much, and made a glorious profession of Religion for a time, as if they had tasted of the tree of Life, as *Judas*, *Demas*, *Hymeneus* and *Philetus*, the Church of *Sardis*, and many in all places that have gone under the name of zealous professors; and many of our Quakers amongst us have been reputed yet have fallen away, Some to one sect and opinion some to another. What shall we think of these men?

Answ. At the very best they were but as the stony ground, or as the thorny ground, they never gave religion nor the Word that deep rooting in their hearts that might bring forth fruit unto Salvation

tion, *they never received the truth, in the love of the truth.* Their knowledge and profession at the best was but frothy, speculative, swimming in the brain only, puft up these were with pride of their parts, and gifts which they seemed to have, never laid a sure foundation at first being truly humbled as they should, but as pride cast out the Reprobate Angels into hell, So it is *pride* hath cast these men out of the Church on Earth. Certain it is, that such men had never the true work of grace in them. *They went out from us, because they were not of us, for if they had been of us they would have continued with us.* 2 Th. 2. 10. 2 Joh. 2. 19

But we see that many that have been forward in Religion, and frequented religious Exercises, have been diligent and constant hearers of the Word, yet have fallen from their first love, have grown cold, negligent and careless in duties; What shall we judge of these? *Object* 3.

It is true in these Apostatizing times many have fallen, woe be to Sathan for his malice, and sad is the condition of such. But this proveth not that these fall totally and finally from saving grace. They may fall from the measure, degree, and some parts; But not from the Habit and Grace it self. *The seed still abideth in them.* There is never such an absolute and total defection of grace in a believer, but such sooner or later *Awake and strengthen the things that remain that are ready to dye,* as we see in *David, Peter,* &c. the very Elect themselves may sinn often and fall foully, there is no question, but that they may sin unto death, that we deny. Man being partly flesh and partly spirit, sin proceeds not from the Regenerate but from the worser part; so that there is no condemnation to such. *Ans.* Rom. 8. 1.

But what, and how far may a godly man fall from grace, and the truth? *Quest.* 4.

First in his Judgment, which being once sound, and according to the truth, he may come to have this clouded *Answ.* 1. In Judgment

and eclypsed, and carried from that *truth* he once held and imbraced. It was the case of the *Galatians*, Gal. 1.6. *who fell off to another Gospel.* So did *Hymeneus* and *Philetus*, they *erred* concerning the Faith. And the same was foretold of our times, that there *should be a departure from the Faith*, and men should give heed to the spirits of errors, as we see in our Quakers and other *Phanatiques* at this day. Which if they belong to God, will at last be brought to see their errors, and be brought to the way of truth.

2. In Affection. Secondly in Affection Gods Children themselves may suffer a decay for a time, and instead of that *Love*, *Zeal* and *Affection*, they once had to God, Religion and Godliness, this may be much abated for a time, and the vigour and heat thereof may be cooled and much abated, till the same be blowed up and quickned by some awaking Ministery or sore affliction, this was the case of the Church of *Ephesus*, Whom Christ reprehends so sharply, that they *had lost their first love*, abated much in their love, *Zeal*, and Rev 2.4. forwardness in religion & godliness they had formerly professed.

3. In Practice. Thirdly in Practice; who sees not in these licentious times the liberty of many, even of those that have professed religion, began in the Spirit, but end in the flesh? such things as they seemed formerly to hate and disavow, now that they see the times to favour them, goes well enough down with them.

This may be the condition even of the godly themselves, till the Lord awake them and give them repentance. O that such would but consider what a scandal such are to the Church of God, how such open the mouths of the wicked, and sad the hearts of the righteous by their backsliding; And how hard their repentance will be to them at last.

Now for the Reasons of the point Why the godly can never totally fall away from grace, they are these.

First, Because as all true, saving, and Sanctifying grace comes from God, the God of all grace: So it shall never leave that Soul that is indued therewith, untill it bring him to the fruition of God at last. And therefore true faith is called *The faith of Gods Elect.* And by this may a man *make his Calling and Election sure,* Inasmuch *as the gifts and calling of God are without repentance.* *Reas.* 1. Tit. 1. 1. 2 Pet. 1. 10. Rom. 11. 29.

Secondly, This privilege have all true believers, and such as know the Gospel aright, and have *received the truth in the love of it*, they are the members of the Mysticall body of Jesus Christ, and it is as easy for Sathan to pull Christs body out of Heaven, as to overthrow a member of his. 2. 2 Thes 2. 10.

Besides there is a promise gone out of his mouth, that Christs sheep shall never perish, *neither shall any pluck them out of his hands.* It is true these may sin and fall fouly, yet *though he fall he shall not be cast off, for the Lord putteth under his hand.* 3. Joh. 10. 28. Psal. 37. 24.

Let us apply this.

This serves in the First place to magnifie the unspeakable goodness of God, Who doth not only give these graces to his children, but preserves them in them; so that now the estate of a true believer is much more happy than the state of *Adam* in *Paradice*, who had in him the power of *standing* and *falling*, but it is otherwise with these who *Are kept by the power of God unto salvation.* *Use* 1. 1 Per. 1. 5.

Secondly. Since such as have received the *truth* in the love of the truth, by the power whereof they are regenerate, and become the Sons of God by Adoption and grace, these shall never fall totally and finally from this grace received, but this truth shall *abide in them for ever*; let us not be offended, when we take notice of others that never were thus *rooted* and *established* in the faith, to fall away either into some gross, and notorious sinfull courses, or unto Sects and Heresies, as many doe in these days. These 2.

never received the truth in the love of it, these were tyed to the Church, by this threed of an outward profession only, and were never united to Christ by faith, such was *Demas*, *Hymeneus*, and *Philetus*. Such have been, and such these staggering times of ours yield us plentifull examples of.

3. Thirdly and lastly, Seeing the perseverance of the Saints is so sure and certain, what a ground of unspeakable comfort may this be to such in the certainty of their condition? be their afflictions, temptations or corruptions what they will, such may depend upon it that they are safe in the Main. The Elect shall persevere in the state of grace unto the end. Although through Satans temptations, and frailty of the flesh, and strength of corruption, they may fall from the vigour and heat, and zeal and affection that sometimes they had in duties, yea and slip into those sins they formerly repented of, and so they are interrupted in the way of perseverance, yet from the Habit and state of grace once received they shall never fall. All the Elect Joh. 6. 39. being given to Jesus Christ, Christ saith, *It is the Fathers will that of all which he hath given me, I should lose nothing*. A marvelous comfort to the godly. O how should this stir up all the faithfull to walk worthy of such a mercy, and to take heed of falling back! though it be true that the godly cannot sin unto death, nor finally and totally fall from grace, yet the backslidings of his Children the Lord will most severely yet in mercy correct, as we see in *David*, And that joy and comfort which they once felt whilst they kept up their watch, and walked humbly with God, they recover at last with much difficulty, God will make them cry, and call, yea many times makes them go mourning and drooping to their graves.

verse

Verse 3.

Grace be with you, mercy and peace from God the Father, and from the Lord Iesus Christ, the Son of the Father, with truth and love.

HEre we have the Fourth part, which is the last part of the *Preface* unto the Epistle, and that is the Prayer. 4. Part of the Preface.

And herein doth our Apostle wish unto this *Lady* all happiness, both Spiritual, and Temporal, and that from God the Father, the Author and fountain of all happiness and Grace, through the mediation of Jesus Christ his only Son.

In this prayer we are to observe three things,
1. The Enumeration of those Graces which he wisheth for, *Grace, Mercy, Peace, Truth*, and *Love*.
2. The Persons to whom he wisheth them, *To you*, viz. the *Lady* and her *Children*.
3. The Persons of whom he asketh them, *God the Father, and the Lord Iesus Christ Son of the Father*.

For the Enumeration of those Graces he asketh for them, these are five. 1.
1. Grace.
2. Mercy.
3. Peace.
4. Truth.
5. Love.

By Grace is sometimes meant the gifts of the Holy Ghost, as where the Apostle saith, *To every one of us is given Grace, according to the measure of the gift of Christ*, and again, *the manifold Graces of God*. Where the gifts of the Holy Ghost are likewise termed *Graces*. 1 Ephe. 4. 7. 1 Pet. 4.

Secondly, Sometimes the word *Grace* is taken for the favour and love of God, accepting of us, and being pleased 2.

pleased with us in his Son Christ, as where it is so often said, *By Grace yee are saved.* Or thus;

1. The *Grace* of God towards us, which respecteth us as the *Object* of it.

2. The *Grace* of God in us, which respecteth us as the *Subject* of it.

We are in the first *Grace*, the second *Grace* is in us. Now it is not any particular Grace or gift of Gods Spirit in us, that is here meant, but only the Grace of God towards us, whereof we are the Objects, or, the gracious favour and good-will of God, whereby he is well pleased with us, and accepts us for his own, in his Son Jesus Christ.

Now mark how our Apostle in this prayer begins with this *Grace* before all other things wished to this *Lady* and her *Children*, even this favour and love of God, saying *Grace be to you.* There are some things to be observed in the general before we come to the Words themselves.

Obser. 1. Salutations needful.

First, We may observe, that Salutations one of another are both antient and Apostolical. It hath been a duty practised by writers of all kinds, *Divine*, and *Human*, by *Iewes*, *Gentiles*, *Grecians*, *Philosophers*, all had their several forms of Greetings and Salutations. The Salutation of Christ himself was *Peace, Peace be unto you*, and my *Peace I leave with you.* The Salutations of the Apostles were *Grace* and *Peace*; several other Nations and People had their several forms, and greetings; yea in the time of the Old testament they differed much from the time of the New, *Peace* was their Salutation, Go in Peace. The word *Grace* not used therein But the Apostles in the New Testament since the mystery of our Redemption was revealed, Salute by *Grace* and *Peace*.

2 Reg. 5. 19.

Use. 1.

Which should serve to admonish all to avoyd that Cynical Austerity, in our Carriage and Behaviour one towards another, practised this day by our *Quakers*, and other *Fanaticks*, that will give reverence to none,

none, nor Salute none, but neglect this so commendable a Duty amongst Christians, as was practised by Christ and his Apostles, Jew, Gentile, and all.

Secondly, This may serve to admonish all to be careful in the practice of this Duty, not to perform it in a Complemental manner, as the manner of the most are, but heartily and seriously to salute and wish well to others in the Lord. For when a holy Salutation shall proceed from a holy and Sanctified heart, it is a powerful and effectual means to procure the grace wished for, and a man fares the better all the day after, for such a Salutation from a Godly man. 2.

Secondly, Since our Apostle wisheth *Grace, Mercy,* and *Peace,* to this *Lady* and her *Children*, whom he so highly commended before, We are taught, *Obser.* 2.

That the best Christians stand in need of the prayers of other, and the daily increase of Grace and strength, to proceed in their Christian course. Thus *Paul* prayeth for the Church, *That they might be strengthned with all might in the inward man.* And thus the Apostle exhorts the *Ephesians* to go out of themselves, and to seek for Spiritual strength from God, *Finally my Brethren be strong in the Lord, and the power of his might*; And withall subjoyns how we must be armed to resist our Spiritual Enemies. Christians have need of Spiritual strength to walk in a Spiritual condition. And hence is it that Saint *Iohn* prays thus for this Elect *Lady*, and her *Children*, for *Grace* and *Mercy* from God more and more to be multiplied upon them. Christians stand in need of daily supply and grace. Ephe. 6. 12.

The Reasons follow.

The best Christians that have the greatest measure of Gods Sanctifying Graces, are sinners, and subject to decline in Grace, and therefore stand in need both of the prayers of others, and to be strengthned in Grace. *Man* (saith *Eliphaz*) *to Iob, is born to misery, as the sparks fly upward,* and *who liveth and sinneth not?* And hence is it, that they stand so much in need of *Reas.* 1. Iob 5. 7.

Grace

Grace of Corroboration, that they fall not. Indeed if the godly could so comfortably, and constantly walk with God, as that they could still preserve their sweet Communion with him, it were something, but this who can doe?

2. Another Reason is set down by the Apostle, *We*
1 Cor. 13. 9. *know but in part*, therefore we can believe but in part, and are Sanctified but in part; all Grace is but in part, there is no perfection to be looked for here.

Vse. This serves to put every one of us in mind of our Duties, *viz.* Never to sit down nor rest in any beginings of Grace received, but ever to strive to go forward, and to go on from one measure of Grace to another, till at last we come to a full measure in Christ: whilst we are here we stand in need of all holy helps and means to build us up further; As the preaching of the Word, the Prayers, and Exhortations of our Brethren. And to this end we should hold Communion with the Saints, and such as are able to build us up, Pray for us, and Strengthen us, that we might grow in Grace.

But the main Instruction is this.

Doct. That since our Apostle begins his prayer thus, *Grace be with you, Mercy and Peace*, &c.

Grace the Foundation of all blessings. That Gods Grace is the foundation of all other blessings, *Mercy*, *Peace*, *Truth*, and *Love*, all these flow from *Grace*.

1. *Grace* what. Where by *Grace*, we are to understand the free love and favour of God in Jesus Christ, whereby he hath Eternally, and undeservedly loved us in Jesus Christ, who by nature deserved no love. This then is the sum of this *Salutation*, An earnest prayer, and unfeigned desire of this holy Apostle, that since this *Lady* and her *Children* had given up their names to Christ, and so found little favour and peace with men, that they might find *Grace*, and *Mercy*, and *Peace* with God.

And this being propounded in the first place, leads us

us to the poynt, That the free and undeserved favour and love of God in Christ, is the Foundation of all good.

See how the Lord inforceth this upon his own people, *The Lord set his love upon you, and chose you, not because ye were more in number*, &c. *but because he loved you.* Deu. 7. 7.

And again, *Say not in thy heart, because of my righteousness, the Lord hath given me this good land, for thou art a stifnecked people.* Deu. 9. 4.

And if they deserved not a temporal Canaan, much less Spiritual blessings from God. Yea before the Lord covered us with his skirts, we were in our blood, and no eye pityed us, nor had compassion upon us, when the Lord took pitty upon us, and said *unto us live.* So that it is his free favour and love in Christ that is the Foundation of all our comfort. Eze. 16.

1. All Spiritual blessings, as our *Election, Redemption, Vocation, Justification, Faith, Repentance* &c. His free love is the Beginning, Middle, and End of all, yea all in all in the matter of our Salvation. *By grace ye are saved.*

2. All Temporal blessings flow also from this fountain, and therefore hence it is that the Lord so often minds the people of *Israel* that it was not for their Righteousnes sake, that the Lord gave them that good land, but because he set his love upon them. So that unless the Lord apply himself to do us good, we thrive and prosper no way, *Godlines hath the promise of this life, and the life to come.* Deu. 7. 7. Deu. 9. 4.

The Reasons are,

First, In regard of the Worth, and Excellency of *Grace*, It reacheth unto the Soul, and it is *Grace* alone that will yield sound comfort in life, in death, and after death. *Reas.* 1.

Secondly, It procures unto us a Sanctified use of all estates; this is that Philosophers stone, that turns all into Gold, causing *all things to work for the best to all that love and fear God.* 2. Rom. 8.

Thirdly, This is proper and peculiar only unto Saints, 3.

Saints, and is given with Christ, whereas common gifts and outward good things, are many times bestowed from Gods left hand without Christ.

Use. 1. This serves to condemn the prepostorous course of the World, that preferr the World and the things of this life before *Grace*, their *Corn and Wine and Oyl.* Psal. 4. Esay 55. Spend their dayes and *lay out their strength, and mo for bread*, nor which *will not satisfie*, and never think of *Grace* till death come, and the gate of *Grace* be shut, Mat 25. like those foolish Virgins that slumbred and slept when the time was to store their Lamps with Oyl, and when it was too late, cry out *O give us of your Oyl.* Then send for the Minister, and then one good prayer Sir, Pro. 1. 28. When it is to be feared it is too late. *Then shall they call upon me, but I will not hear, they shall seek me early, but shall not find me.* And the *Reason* is there added, v. 29. *Because they hated knowledge, and did not choose the fear of the Lord.*

2. Secondly Seeing the Grace and Favour of God in Jesus Christ is the Fountain of all blessings, Spiritual, and Temporal, it serves to direct us in the way to true happiness. Would we be truly happy here, and everlastingly blessed hereafter? Grace, and Grace alone will do this. None knew this better than *David* did, and he will tell us, *Many say who will shew us any good?* Psal. 4. 6. But for my part saith he this is the thing that I desire, *Lord lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon me.* And hence is it that *David*, so often calleth the Lord his *portion*, and the thing that he longed for.

Quest. But what course should a man take to come by this Grace?

Answ. 1. Labour to find the want of Grace, what thou art by nature, a miserable, lost undon Creature for ever, without this Grace and favour of God towards thee in Christ.

2. Get thy heart truly humbled for this so miserable a Condition.

3. Labour

3. Labour to get an Hungring and thirſting deſire after Gods favour and love.

4. By the hand of Faith lay hold upon this Grace and favour of God in Chriſt, offered to every true believer in the promiſes of the Goſpel.

And laſt of all, This may be matter of ſingular comfor and conſolation unto thoſe which can find this work of *Grace* in themſelves, that their ſins are parconed, and that God is reconciled unto them in Chriſt, Though their wants be many, in reſpect of outward things, yet here is that that makes amends for all. *Thy loving Countenance* (Saith *David*) *is better than life it ſelf.* The whole World is not to be Compared or prized to it. 3. Pſ. 63. 3.

MERCY.

The Second Grace here prayed for is *Mercy.* 2.

Now the mercy of God in Scripture is taken two wayes, { 1 In General. 2. More Particular. *Mercy.*

Firſt, In General; ſo doth God ſhew mercy to all Creatures in general, in providing for them as they are his creatures. And of this *Mercy* the very wicked themſelves partake of, *He cauſeth the Sun to ſhine upon the juſt, and unjuſt.* And *the Lord is good to all, and his mercy is over all his works.* And again, *thou Lord ſhalt ſave both man and beaſt.* 1. Pſa. 145. 9. Pſa. 36 6.

Secondly, There is a Special *Mercy* which God ſheweth to the Elect only, pardoning their ſins, Juſtifying, and Sanctifying them, and accepting of them in Chriſt to be his children, and heirs of Eternal life; as, *God is the Saviour of all, eſpecially of them that believe.* *Truly God is good to Iſrael, even to ſuch as are of a pure Heart.* And, *let thy tender mercy O Lord come unto me that I may live.* Now this is that *Mercy* that is here meant, which the Apoſtle deſireth may be given to this *Lady* and her *Children.* And is a fruit and Effect of the former Grace. 2. 1 Tim. 4. 10. Pſal. 73. 1. Pſal. 119.

Now in that he prayeth, that this *Mercy* may be ſhewed upon them,

This

This implyeth two things, { 1. That they were in themselves miserable & had need of *Mercy*. 2. That with the Lord is Mercy for all such poor souls, as stand in need thereof, and seek to him for it.

1. First, That this Woman, though a *Lady*, and her *Children* high born, were by nature in a miserable state and condition, and such as stood in need of mercy at Gods hand, for *Mercy* doth presuppose misery, and misery is the proper object of mercy.

Doct. Every man by Nature miserable and such as stand in need of mercy.

This shews what is the Estate of all men by nature of what Estate or Degree soever, They are all in themselves, and own natures, no better than poor, wretched, miserable Creatures, such as stand in extreme need of *Mercy*. And this is true of all the seed of *Adam*. Christ excepted: for there needs no mercy where there is no misery, there needs no purging where there is no pollution, where there is no sore there needs no salve, where there is no offence there needs no pardon. Albeit this were enough to clear this poynt, yet because it is so necessary a truth to be taken out of all, I shall further confirm it. See this in the verdict of God himself, *My spirit shall not allwayes strive with mans spirit, for he is but flesh.* Gen. 6.3. The word signifies a lump and bundle of corruption, And *the thought and imagination of mans heart is evil continually.* Gen. 8. 21. *Behold* (saith *David*) *I was born in sin, and in iniquity hath my Mother conceived me,* Psal. 51. 5. And the Apostle saith, *that the wisdom of the flesh is enmity with God.* Rom. 8.7. Hereby shewing, that even our best desires, purest inclinations, and sweetest affections, by nature are but detestable before God. This is farther expressed by the Apostle *Paul, We our selves* (saith he) *were in times past foolish, and disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts,* &c. Tit. 3.3.

Now

Now this natural misery of ours is seen in us in two things.

1. In the sins whereof we are all guilty.

2. In the punishment and curse to the which all are subject.

First, For sins. What child of *Adam* is there, high or low, Jew or Gentile, Rich or Poor, Christ excepted, that is not tainted with Original sin? Where is that man or woman, whose whole nature, soul and body, and all the faculties and powers of both, are not tainted, and prone to all sin? And from this Original sin, flows a multitude of Actual sins, as Saint *James* saith, *In many things we sin all.* And, *the Righteous man falls seaven times a day.* And, *who can tell how oft he offendeth?* 1. For our sins. Iam. 3. 2. Pro. 24. Psal. 19. 12.

Secondly, For the Curse and punishment. There is not the least sin whereof any soul is guilty, but these punishments lye upon him, and are due unto him. 2. For the punishment.

1. He is hereby made subject to the wrath of God. *God is angry with the wicked every day,* and if there were no more but this, In what a miserable condition is a sinner?

2. Hereby he is become the slave and vassal of the Devil; we account that man most miserable that is a slave to the Turk, much more miserable is his condition, that is a slave to the Devil.

3. By sin man becomes subject to many infirmities, diseases, sicknesses, such as no Physician can, nor doth recover.

4. After a troublesom and miserable life here, he is subject to death and mortality at last.

5. And lastly, His misery ends not here, but after this comes the misery of all miseries, viz. Eternal destruction of Soul and Body to all Eternity

Thus we may see the Condition of all by Reason of sin.

The bare consideration of this poynt may serve to humble us, and root out our of hearts, this natural pride *Vse.* 1.

that

that is in us. When we shall consider that we have in us no holiness at all, no purity &c. But in stead thereof all manner of unholyness and impurity: The understanding part of man, Will, and Affection, there is not the least part that is not defiled, but all is become corrupt, polluted, and unclean. O that men would labour to finde out their miserable condition, and weigh these several curses, and punishments, and seeing it bewayl it; and bewayling it, labour to come out of it.

2. That with the Lord is mercy, *Doct.* God is a God rich in mercy to such as are in misery.

Secondly, As man is full of misery, so the Lord is full of mercy, which he is ready to extend to all that need it, and seek for it.

Now that God is a God rich in mercy to such as are in misery, The Scriptures are abundant proof of this. The Apostle makes mention of *the Riches of his goodness*, and *the Riches of his glory*. He is called *the Father of mercy*; *Let me fall into the hands of God* (saith *David*) *for with him there is mercy*. And, *with the Lord there is mercy, and with him there is plentious redemption.*

Rom. 2.4. Rom. 9. 23. 1 Cor. 1.3 Ps. 130.3.

Quest. But how doth it appear that God is a God so rich in mercy?

Answ. This appears two wayes.

1. In pardoning the Sins of the penitent.
2. In remitting the punishment due to sin.

1. Esay 55.7.

First, In pardoning the sins of the penitent. This the Lord, doth as it appeareth, *Let the wicked forsake his wayes, and the unrighteous his own imaginations, and return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him, and to our God, and he will abundantly pardon.*

Psal. 103. 11. v. 12.

So the Prophet *David*, *As high as the heaven is above the earth, so great is his mercy* &c. And *as far as the East is from the West, so far hath he set our sins from us.* And if we look for examples, this appeareth by the mercy the Lord shewed to *Manasses* a Soothsayer, to *Paul* a persecuter, to *Mary Magdalen*, *Zachens*, the *Jaylor* &c.

Secondly

Secondly, He is merciful in remitting to the penitent all the punishment and curses due unto them for their sins, so as the Apostle saith, *There is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus.* Rom. 8. 1. As for the troubles of this life, and death at the end thereof, although the Elect be subject unto them as well as others, yet they are not unto them as unto others, the curse and sting of sin being plucked out, they are turned into mercyes and blessings. And thus many times are the sharpest afflictions blessed unto them, the Lord in mercy using them as the means to humble them, and to purge out some corruption or other that happily had not otherwise been discovered, and to wean them from the world, so that at last they shall be forced to say, *It is good for me that I have been afflicted.* Psal. 119.

And they are likewise blessed in their Deaths, forafter this *they rest from their labours.* And thereupon the voyce from heaven cryed, *write from thenceforth they are blessed.* Rev. 14. 13.

O what an incouragment may this be to them that have not yet received mercy, to come to God for it, for he is a God *rich in mercy.* This should move us to come unto God, this should be a strong cord to draw and pull in Rebbels, and to bring home such as are yet without. *Pirats* when proclamations of Rebellion are out against them, then they keep in, and make as good shift for themselves as they can, but when mercy and pardon is proclamed, and offered, then they make as much haste to submit themselves as they can. If there be *hue* and *cry* after a thief he runs the further, but newes of a pardon brings him back. So when the Lord makes proclamation, as *Return O backsliding Israel, and I will heal your backslidings.* And then what follows? *Behold we come unto thee, for thou art our Lord God.* Ier. 3. 22. O what a sad thing is, this that a poor sinner should turn his back upon God, and that God should pursue this wretched soul, and intreat him to receive mercy, and importune him? Though men fear not God, nor 2. Cor. 5. 20.

Reverence his Ministers, nor regard their own souls; yet God's importunity should prevail with them. If not, this very mercy of God shall one day sink the souls
Pro. 1. 28. of such, into the bottomless pit of Hell for refusing it.

2. Secondly, This serves for our Admonition, to take heed that we take not occasion hereby to live in sin, because we hear that God is merciful, what is this but as *Iude* speaketh, to *turn the grace of God into wantonness*?
Iude 4. Which he makes there a brand of a wicked man and a Reprobate, who are appointed for condemnation. Yea Saint *Paul* calleth this the *despising of the*
Rom. 2. 4 *bountifullness of God*, and affirmeth that such do but *heap up wrath, against the day of wrath.* Rather let us remember the counsel of the same Apostle, *Shall we*
Deut. 29. 19. *sin that grace may abound? God forbid.* And further consider that of *Moses*, *He that shall bless himself in his own evil ways saying, I shall have peace, though I walk according to the stubbornesse of my own heart, the Lord will not be merciful unto that man.* Though there be mercy with the Lord, yet it appertaineth not to all men indefinitely, but only to such as are broken-hearted, that feel their sins, and beg at his hands the pardon of them.

And thus much for the second grace here prayed for, and that is *Mercy*.

The third Grace here prayed for is *Peace*.

3. Grace is *Peace.* The word *Peace*, is taken sundry wayes in Scripture.
Exo. 18. 7. First, For outward *Peace*, welfare, and prosperity in the things of this life. And thus *Moses* and *Iethro* meeting together and saluting each other, they asked each other of their *Peace*, that is of their welfare, how they thrived and prospered in the World.

Secondly, By *Peace* is meant that *Peace* we have with God through Jesus Christ, who is our *Peace*, as, *Being*
Rom. 5. 1. *justified by faith we have peace with God.*

Thirdly, *Peace* with our selves, both outward and inward.

Fourthly

Fourthly, *Peace* with men, and with all creatures, the multitude of believers were of one heart. Act. 4.32.

The *Peace* here meant, are all those blessed fruits and effects that follow *Grace*, and *Mercy*.

So that *Grace* and *Mercy* is the foundation of true *Peace*. It is the ground and foundation of that *Peace* we have with God; when a man stands in favour with God, is reconciled to him in Jesus Christ; of this speaketh the Apostle, *Being justified by faith we have peace towards God*: When God in Christ is one with man, and man in Christ is one with God. *Doct.* Grace & Mercy the foundation of true Peace.

Secondly, In the *Peace* we have with the Angels of God: For when a man is reconciled to God, the very Angels are at peace with him, guard him, pitch their Tents round about him, love him, rejoyce to do him good, whose office is in life and death, and after death to be ministring Spirits for their good. Psal. 34.

Thirdly, It consists in that *Peace* they have within themselves, that is the peace of Conscience, when the Conscience being washed and purified in the blood of Christ, doth not accuse but excuse of sin. And this is that peace that *Solomon* calleth a *Continual feast, a peace that passeth all understanding*. Such a *Peace* that none know, but such as injoy it. Pro. 15. 15. Phil 4 7.

Fourthly, It doth consist likewise in the peace they have amongst themselves: for all the faithful are linked together in love, being made members one of another, as of old, *the multitude of believers were of one heart*. And all these blessed fruits and effects must needs follow this *Grace* and *Mercy*, in our reconciliation to God. for, Act. 4.32.

First, When Gods wrath is appeased, and he reconciled unto us, what should hinder our peace? there will follow this sweet peace with God, there will follow this inward peace with a mans own Conscience, for being freed from the guilt and punishment of sin, the Conscience is at peace. There will follow peace with the Angels of God, who will pitch their Tents round about *Reas* 1. Rom. 5. 1. Ps. 91. 11.

about them; there will follow peace with good men. Believers will be of one heart.

Peace with evil men, *When a mans wayes please God he will make their enemies their friends.* Yea peace with all Creatures in Heaven and Earth, and all shall favour them, and be instrumental for their good.

2. Rom. 8. 32. Secondly, When the Lord shall bestow that blessing of all blessings the chiefest, the Lord Jesus Christ, *shall he not with him give us all things?* if he hath given us the greater gift, shall he deny us the lesser? If God see wealth good for us, if peace good for us, if health, prosperity, yea what condition God sees good for us, if he have given us his Son he will give the same unto us.

Use. 1. From the Apostle s order in asking for *Peace* to this *Lady*, and her *Children*, namely after he had asked for *Grace*, and *Mercy*, Hence we may observe the true order of seeking for the blessings of God. Our first and chiefest care must be to obtain the *Grace* and *Mercy* of God, be truly reconciled to God in Christ, and at peace with him, this is the foundation of all good; this teacheth our Saviour himself, *First seek the kingdom of God and the Righteousnes thereof, and all things* Mat. 6. 32. *else shall be ministred unto you.*

Who then is the man that desireth to see good dayes on Earth? let him lay this foundation, begin with God, seek his favour, his countenance, and grace. When *Ioseph* a Godly man was set over *Pharaohs* house, all Gen. 93. things prospered there. Art thou a Poor, man and wouldst have thy Estate bettered? Art thou a Rich man, and wouldst have thy Estate continued? say with Psal. 4. 6. *David, Lord grant me thy countenance, thy favour and Grace.* There is no other way to be truly happy, and blessed indeed, but being at peace with God.

O think on this you that are parents, It is better for you to leave *Grace* in your Childrens hearts, than to leave store of gold in your Chests.

This is to lay a good foundation for your houses, and for your posterity to make them stand, and not come to

to ruine when you are dead and gon.

Secondly, If Grace and Mercy be the foundation of all true *Peace* and true happines. This shews the fearfull estate and condition of all graceless and wicked men; Men that want grace, such can have no *Peace*. *There is no Peace to the wicked saith my God.* Such can have no peace with God, they can have no peace with their own Consciences, they can have no peace with Men, with Angels or the Creature, it is full sore against the will of the Creature to serve a wicked man; thy Horse grones to bear thee, thy Cow to give thee Milk, Physick to help thee. The Estate of a wicked man, is like the Estate of *Ionas*, for whose disobedience the Lord sent the wind upon the ship, the Winds blow, the Sea rageth, the Mariners Cry, and every one labours to cast out the goods to save their lives. In the mean time *Ionas* the cause of all is fast asleep. Now what shall we say? that *Ionas* all this while was in *Peace*? No, no, God found him out at last. So fareth it with a wicked man, he sinneth, God is offended, Heaven is barred against him, Hell openeth its mouth wide ready to receive him; in the mean time the Sinner and Drinketh in the depth of a dead sleepy secure conscience, but this security of his will end Eateth with a fearfull wakening. 2. Esay. 57. 21.

But none seem to have more *Peace*, and outward Tranquillity than the wicked? *Their Cow casteth not her Calf*, as *Iob* saith, they have all things that their hearts desire *&c.* Object.

It is true they have a kind of *Peace*, a drunken *Peace* in the face, and in the countenance, but not in the heart. *Iob* compares it to a dream. Such a *Peace* had *Iudas* for a time whilst he fingered his thirty peeces of Silver, but it ended in a fearfull wakning. Such a *Peace* had *Belshazer* in his cups, and *Achan* in his prey, but what became of these at last? Answ. 1.

Secondly, The *Peace* that wicked men have is unsound, in the face, but not in the heart: for that is 2.

Pro. 14. 13. moſt true that *Solomon* ſaith of wicked men, *In the midſt of laughter the heart is ſad.* Thou ſeeſt the outward peace of many a wicked man, but thou little knoweſt the ſecret gripings, and throwes they have in their ſouls and conſciences.

3. Thirdly, The end of a wicked mans *Peace* will one day be fearful & miſerable, & ſhall we call that peace? Suppoſe ſome Traytor in the Tower ſhould take his pleaſure in riding his great horſe, or in Feaſting and Banqueting, when it may be the next day he may be called forth to the block, would any envy this man for his proſperity? this is the caſe of all wicked men that want *Grace*, tis true they have an outward *Peace*, but God being not reconciled unto them, they can have no true peace.

The Fourth Grace here prayed for is *Truth*.

4. Grace is *Truth*. Truth what. Now by *Truth* in this place is meant Singleneſs, Plainneſs, and Simplicity in a mans ſpeeches, free from falſhood, Hypocriſie, Equivocation or diſſimulation, for ſo is *Truth* defined

To be a Virtue whereby a man without any intent to lye or deceive, ſpeaketh as the *Truth* is from his very heart.

Doct. God loveth truth and ſincerity of heart. Pſal. 15. 2. This is a ſingular Virtue and Conſcionably to be practiſed of every Chriſtian. This *David* makes a mark of a man that ſhall dwell in Gods Tabernacle. *He that walketh uprightly, and worketh righteouſneſs, and ſpeaketh the truth from his heart. Are not thy eyes upon the truth?* ſaith *Ieremy*, And *my ſon give me thy heart.* And *Behold thou loveſt truth in the inward parts.* And Chriſt tells us that the true worſhipers are they that worſhip God *in Spirit and in Truth.*

Pro. 23. 26. Pſ. 51. 6. Ioh. 4. 23. Gen. 17. 1. And this was that main condition that God made in his Covenant with *Abraham*, *walk before me and be thou upright.* Yea this is ſuch a grace in the hearts of his Servants, that where it is, the Lord beareth with many

many faults and imperfections in them for the *Truths* sake, as we may see in those good Kings, *Asa, Iehoshaphat* &c. all whose halings & infirmities the Lord passed by when their hearts were *upright before the Lord.* 1 Reg. 15. 14.

Now that God loveth *Truth* and sincerity of heart these Reasons shew.

First, God at the first created man in his uprightness and truth of heart, even after his own Image and Similitude. And therefore he that would approve himself to be the Son of God must practise *Truth.* *Reason* 1.

Secondly, The Lord requireth this above all things, at the hands of his servants, It was the Lords charge to *Abraham, Integer esto,* walk before me in integrity, in plainness and truth, let me never finde any doubling or dissembling with thee. 2.

Thirdly, The Lord commends and commands it by his Prophets, and Apostles. *O Lord* (saith *Ieremy*) *are not thy eyes upon the truth?* q. d. Art not thou a God that lovest sincerity and truth in the hearts and mouths of men? *Thou lovest truth in the inward parts.* And what delight the Lord taketh in *Truth* we may see by that of the Prophet, *These are the things that ye shall doe saith the Lord, Speak ye the truth every man to his Neighbour, execute Iudgment truly and uprightly in your gates, and let none of you imagin evil in your hearts against your neighbours, love no false oath, for all these things I hate saith the Lord.* 3. Ier 5. 3. Psal. 51. 6. Zach. 8. 16.

Fourthly, The Lord doth highly esteem, and promiseth his blessing to them that practise this *Truth, Do well O Lord to those that are good and true of heart.* Where observe how the Prophet joyns these two together, *Good* and *True.* The word *Good* carrieth too high a Commendation for any man to deserve, Notwithstanding that man that is *true in heart* the Holy Ghost doth stile by this name, albeit he hath his infirmities and wants. 4.

Let us us apply this. *Vse* 1.

This gives us to consider, what an Excellent grace

and virtue this *Truth* is, and that which indeed is rare to be found amongst men, either towards God, or man.

1. With God. First, Towards God. We promised in our Baptism to forsake the Devil and all his works. But where is this *Truth* in the performance of that Baptismal Vow and Covenant we made with God? And we promised to serve him in Righteousness and Holyness to our lives ends; But we have served Sathan, and our own lusts, and have walked contrary to God, his Lawes and wayes. How often upon our Sacrament dayes, and in time of Sickness and distress have we promised reformation of heart and life, but have been Covenant-breakers with our God? we have had no *Truth* in our vowes, Covenants, and promises, all which God will charge home upon us one day.

2. With Man. Secondly, For men; it is woful to hear how every man complaineth of his Neighbour, how little *Truth* there is in him, and what little trust can be given to their words or bonds. *Truth* in the tongue is very common, as, *Truly, Trust me, Believe me, upon my Faith, and Truth*, but in deed and in *Truth*, this Virtue is hard to finde. And surely if the Prophet *David* might complain thus in his time, *Help Lord for there is not a Godly man left, the faithful are fayled from amongst the Children of men*, Much more may this complaint be taken up of us in our dayes, wherein there is so little *Truth* amongst men.

But let us hear a little of those objections that carnal men have in defence of themselves that want this *Truth*.

Object. 1. Tush say some, what talk you so much of *Truth*? *Truth* is a good thing indeed, but the Proverb is, *He that useth it shall dye a Begger.* A very prophane Proverb, and an argument of a very prophane heart of such as use it. Such a one shall be so far from dying a begger, as that he shall dy a Rich man, for Rich shall he be in this, that he hath a good Conscience; and had a man no-

Answ.

thing

thing in the World but this, were not this great Substance? *Godliness* (saith Saint *Paul*) *is great gain.* And *David* saith, that this is the man that should rest upon Gods hill, that *Speaketh the truth from his heart.* 1 Tim. 6. 6. Psal. 15. 2.

But may not a man sometime in sport and jest tell a lye? *Object.* 2.

Not so; for the threatning runs in general thus, *Thou shalt destroy them that speak lyes,* the Lord makes no exception there. *Answ.* Prov. 6. Psal. 5.

But suppose that by telling of an untruth, that some good may come thereby? and I do it for that end, and intend no hurt in speaking an untruth? *Object.* 3.

Yet this is against the rule, which is, *thou shalt not do evill that good may come of it.* No not the least evill that the greatest good may come thereby. *Austin* saith *Nusquam adducendum esse in cælum per mendacium.* We are bound to do all the offices of love and service one for another whatsoever is in our power to do. Only if it come to that poynt, that there is no means left to do him good, but by sinning against God, thou must then leave him though his life lay at the stake. *Answ.* Rom. 3. 8.

Secondly, Seeing God thus loveth *Truth,* and Sincerity of heart, Let us now as many as would be reputed the Children of God, and Children of the *Truth,* approve ourselves to be such indeed, by speaking the *Truth* at all times, without any falshood, lying, or dissimulation; And that for these Reasons. 2.

First, A man by lying becomes most unlike to God, and most like to the Devil, yea the very child of the Devil, who is called *the Father of lyes.* And therefore it is the Devils mother tongue, and native language. Ioh. 8. 44.

Secondly, That man that is a lyer lives in the displeasure and hatred of Almighty God, as *Solomon* saith, *The lying lips be an abomination to the Lord.* And *these things the Lord hates, the haughty eyes, the lying tongue,* &c. *The Lord hates them that speak leasing.* 2. Pro. 12. 22. Pro. 6. 17.

Thirdly, That man that is known to be a lyer there- 4.

by

by so far discrediteth himself amongst those that know him, that he shall not be believed, but still suspected, even when he speaketh the truth.

4. Fourthly, Lying is a work of the old man, altogether unbeseeming the Child of God, and therefore men Col. 3. 9. are admonished *to put off lying.*

5. Fifthly, We must one day give an account to God Mat. 12. *for every idle word*, much more for every lying and deceitfull word. *O consider this ye that forget God.*

Hitherto of the Fourth Grace here wished for, *Truth.*

The Fift and Last Grace here prayed for is *Love.*

5. Grace *Love.* By *Love* here is meant that excellent virtue wher by a man truly, and unfeignedly loveth both God and his Neighbour.

So that this grace of *Love* in man is two-fold.

1. There is a *Love* whereby a man loveth God.

2. There is a *Love* whereby a man loveth his Neighbour.

First, Of that *Love* whereby man loveth God.

1. Manslove to God. The love of a man to God is a Divine Virtue or Grace in the heart of a true believer, whereby he loveth God properly, and simply for himself, resting himself in him, and cleaving to him as the most absolute good.

And in handling of this poynt we are to observe three things.

1. The Reasons why a man must love God.

2. The measure of this *Love*, how much he must love him.

3. The marks thereof, how this love is to be discerned.

First, The Reasons why man must love God. These Reasons for it. are divers.

1. First, For that God is in himself, *viz.* The Fount in of goodness, the greatest and the supreamest good. If it be good that man would have, let him love and

get

set his heart upon the Lord, for what is like to him in goodness?

The Heathen Platonist by the light of Nature, saw that all the beauty and goodness which shineth in the Creature, as the sweetness of the flowers, beauty of the Sun, is but a Splendor and reflection of his goodness. *Invenito si potes aliquid pretiosius Deo et dabitur tibi* Aug.

As oft then as any beauty or good in the Creatures beginneth to affect our hearts, be it what it will be, think, what is there then in him that made these things? and surely God did not make these things so beautifull in their kind to the end we should go a whoring after them, but therein to see the brightness of the Creator.

Secondly, We are to love God, because he loved us first, and hath dearly and most deservedly bought our love. *If when we were enemies to God* (saith the Apostle) *we were reconciled by the Death of his son*, How much more being reconciled doth he merit our love? certainly if we cannot frame our hearts to love him that hath so loved us, we go not so farr as sinners do, who love them that love them. 2. *Dilexit non existentes sed resistentes.* Bern. Luk. 6. 32.

Thirdly, God hath deserved, and dearly bought our love by those innumerable gifts, and benefits he continually bestoweth upon us, Such as if we could but take notice of them would bind us to love him: How many Spiritual blessings hath he bestowed upon us in our Creation, Redemption, Vocation, Justification, means of Grace, giving us hearts to feel him, making the means effectual to us, and not leaveing us as he hath don others, to our own hearts lusts *&c.* Besides the blessings of this life, health, peace, food, raiment, And what doth the Lord require for all these things but love? 3.

And the last Reason but not the least, that binds us to love God, is because of the great things that God hath prepared for those that love him. Such as the Apostle saith, *The eye hath not seen, the ear hath not heard,* 4.

1 Cor. 2. 9. *heard, neither hath it entred into the heart of man to conceive what God hath prepared for them that love him.*

Vse. These things being duly considered of us, and laid to heart, will be good Motives unto us to stirr us up to love God. What a hainous sin were this in us to requite the Lord evil for good? Surely a gracious heart cannot, but smite it self, and be ashamed for sinning against so good a God, who hath been so good and loving to him.

2. The Second is the Measure of this *Love*, how much man must love God.

The measure of this love. The Measure of mans love to God in Scripture is double.

1. By the Law. *Sine modo diligere.* First, There is *Love* which the Law requireth, and that is to love God above all, even with *all our hearts*, and *with all our souls*, and *with all our might*, so as in man, no *Love* must be above it, our hearts, minds, thoughts, must be all upon God. Now as for this measure of love of God, howsoever all men are bound unto it, yet no man since the fall of *Adam* can attain unto it, but even the Regenerat themselves, being but regenerate in part cannot so *love* God.

2. By the Gospel. Secondly, There is a *Love* which the Gospel requireth, and that is when a man unfeignedly desireth, and truly indevoureth to love God, with all his heart and with all his minde, howsoever he falleth short in his obedience thereto. And this *Evangelical love* standeth in three things.

1. When a man begins here truly to love God.

2. When he doth daily grow, and increase in this Love.

3. When he is constant in the same unto the end, so as nothing can draw him from God.

Now this Evangelical *Love*, though it be farr short of that *Love* the Law requireth, yet it pleaseth the Lord mercifully to accept of it for perfect love in Christ, in whom all our imperfections are covered. And so these

places

places are to be understood, where it is said of *Iosiah, that he turned to the Lord with all his heart, and with all his soul, and with all his might, according to the Law of Moses.* And of all *Iuda* it is said, *That they sought the Lord with all their hearts.* These and the like places are to be understood of an Evangelical seeking and loving of God, and not legal, for that is not attainable here, till we come to Heaven to be cloathed upon. 2 Reg. 23. 25. 2. Cor. 15. 15.

This serves to inform us how farr short we fall of that love we ow to God, and which the Law requireth. Which might serve to weed out of the hearts of those deluded men called Quakers, that Satanical pride wherewith they are possest of perfection. O that ever Sathan should so farr prevail to perswade a poor worm of the earth, a very lump of sin and corruption, to think that he dare look God in the face in a sinless condition, these need not a psalm of mercy when they stand at his bar; These will not be beholden to Christ. It is well if in any good measure we have attained to this Evangelical *Love*, that we can unfeignedly desire, and carefully indeavour to *Love* God. None I am sure can truly say they have attained to the former, bless God for that heart, that labours to attain the latter. *Vse* 1.

There are divers marks of true love to God. Amongst the rest take these. 3. Marks of the love of God.

First, A longing desire to converse and to be with God. For this is the nature of *Love*, that it ever coveteth the presence of the thing Beloved, as a Husband, Wife, Gold, Silver, or what thing else that is loved, the fruition thereof is desired. 1. Mark.

And albeit man is on Earth, yet he may be said to converse familiarly with God, three wayes, by all which he testifieth his love to God.

When he is diligent to hear his word, and meditates much and often therein. Thus *David* testified his love to God, *I have loved the habitation of thy house* and again, *One thing have I desired of the Lord which I will require, that* 1 Psal. 116. 1. Ps. 27. 4.

that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the dayes of my life.

2. When he is frequent in prayer, for then he speaks
Psa. 25.1. to God as *David*, *Vnto thee O Lord lift I up my soul.*

3. Thirdly, When a mans minde doth so run after God that he doth earnestly long and desire to be in Heaven with him, where he knows that the Lord will imbrace
Psa. 42.1, 2. him for ever. This *Love* was in *David*, *As the Hart breatheth after the rivers of water, so panteth my soul after thee O God. When shall I come and appear before the presence of God?* So *Paul*, *I desire to be dissolved*, &c.

Vse. Which serves for matter of singular Consolation unto the Godly that delight in hearing, and reading, and meditating upon the word, this is a good evidence unto such that they love God. Whereas such as seldom or never hear the word, seldom or never read the Scripture, nor meditate therein, these may profess long enough their love to God, when there is no love of God in them.

2. The second mark of our love to God is Obedience to
Mark. the Law and Will of God, in those things he com-
Ioh.15.21. mandeth and requireth, for so saith Christ, *If ye love*
v. 23. *me keep my commandements*, and again, *He that hath my*
Ioh.14.10 *Commandements, ye shall abide in my love*, this is a true touchstone of our love to God.

3. The third mark of our love to God is our readiness
In amore nihil amare. and willingness both to do whatsoever he commandeth, as also to suffer what he imposeth, for in love is no dislike. *Iacob* served seaven years for *Rachel*, and they
Gen.29. seemed unto him but a few dayes, and the reason is given, *For he loved her.* If there be this love in us to God, it will make us do any thing, and suffer any thing for God. Hitherto of the love of man to God.

2. The second particular to be observed is the love of
Part, of the love of man to man. man to man, or his Neighbour, This comes now in order to be spoken to, But this we shall referr to the fift verse, where

where the same will be handled more fully.

And so much concerning the first Circumstance of this verse the Enumeration of those graces the Apostle prayes for, namely, 1. Grace, 2. Mercy, 3. Peace, 4. Truth, 5. Love.

2. Part of this verse. The persons to whom he wisheth these graces.

The second part of this verse is the persons to whom he wisheth these Graces may be given of God, *viz.* *To you, Grace be with with you.*

It was then to this *Lady* and her *Children* to whom he desireth these Graces may be given. Not that they were at this time without them, as if they were now to be wrought in them, for the two former verses, and this which follows, shews plainly they had already received these Graces. How were they else the *Elect*? or how could Saint *Iohn* verse the fourth, rejoyce to have found her Children walking in the *Truth*? So that we may not conceive the Apostles meaning to be as if they had no *Grace*, or *Mercy*, but he prayes that these Graces might be continued unto them, and increased in them.

Doct. None so perfect here, but had need to grow more perfect.

The Doctrine is,

That the most Godly, Righteous, and Religious that are, have not the Graces of God in them, in such measure and perfection, but that they stand in need of the Exhortations and Prayers of the Faithfull to grow and increase in them. This *Lady* and her *Children* they had received from God, *Grace* and *Mercy*, and other Graces, yet Saint *Iohn* prayes that the same might more and more grow, and increase in them. The Church of *Colosse* was Eminent for Knowledge and Grace, and yet even for them the Apostle prayes, *That they might increase in the knowledge of God.* Col. 1, 10. And this is farther cleared by that of the Apostle Saint *Paul* to the *Ephesians*, who though they were made light in the Lord, and had the mystery of Gods will made known unto them, so that believers they were. Yet for all this *Paul* prayeth *That God would give them the Spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him, that the eyes of their understanding* Ephe. 1, 17, 18.

derstanding may be inlightned &c. By which it is plain and evident, that though they had the Grace of saving knowledge, yet it was not so perfect but might admit an increase, for which *Paul* prays. And hence is that the Apostle *Peter* doth so earnestly press this exhortation upon Believers, that they attend the Scripture *until the day Dawn, and the day-Starr arise in their hearts*. The meaning is, until they came to attain a more firm and evident knowledge of the things of God and of Christ. And doth not *David* say thus of the Saints of old? *They go on from strength to strength.* And Saint *Paul* exhorts the Romans, that *their love should yet abound more and more.* It is in Grace as it is in Nature, the Babe growes from a Child to a stripling, and from a stripling to full strength. So must we in Grace grow from Grace to Grace till at last we become perfect in Christ Jesus. Thus *Paul* prayes for the *Thessalonians, That they may abound in love one towards another.* All which Scriptures clear this truth, that there is none so Godly, Righteous, or so Religious here in this life, or can attain to that measure of Grace, to be perfect, but stands in need of the Exhortation, Prayers and Godly advice of others.

Psal. 84. 7.
Rom. 1. 17.
1 Pet. 2. 2.
Ephe. 4. 13.
1 Thes. 3. 12.

The Reasons are.

Reas. 1. To wit, because the best of Gods Saints & servants in this life are not capable of perfection. Is any child put by his Master into the highest form the first day he comes to school, or doth he not lead him on by degree? First gives him an easier, and then a harder lesson. And doth not Jesus Christ deal thus with his Scholars in the School of Christianity? doth he not lead us on by degrees from Grace to Grace, and from one measure of Grace to another, till we come to the full measure of the fullness of Christ? Our discoveries of God, of Christ, of Grace, and of Glory, are not all on a suddain and at the present. The Apostles themselves that had the Spirit, and so in a capacity of a more plentiful revelation than we are, yet Christ tells them

I have many things to say unto you, but you cannot bear them now. q.d. I am to reveal them unto you, but *cannot bear them now*, but will take some other time to speak of them unto you, when you are more capable to receive them. Joh. 16. 12.

Secondly, The Lord is thus pleased to keep his Servants low in the sense of their wants, and imperfections, that he might keep them *Humble*. Pride is that sin that is most detestable to God. *God resisteth the proud.* And our nature is not more prone to lift us up, and to wax proud in any thing than in Spiritual gifts. And therefore the Lord in much wisdom thinks it meet to keep us low, that by the sense of our imperfections and wants, we be not lifted up above measure. Surely the sense and knowledge of our wants and imperfections should more humble us and cast us down, than any gifts and graces we have received should lift us up.

Object.

Before we come to the uses, we are to remove one objection, and that is, that we are often pressed by Christ and the Apostles to be *Perfect*. *Be ye perfect as your Heavenly father is perfect.* And, *mark the perfect man and behold the just.* And, *let us go on to perfection*, And, *we preach wisdom among them that are perfect*, And, *Finally brethren farewel, be ye perfect.* These and the like places of Scripture that are mentioned, are alleged by the *Quakers* to prove perfection, and that a man may attain to a sinless perfection in this life, and nothing more frequent in their mouths than that they have attained to such perfection, yea though they have lived in most gross and abominable sins, as Drunkenness, Swearing, and open Profaneness many years, yet if but once come to be listed into that Society, presently they are *perfect* and without sin. Ps 37. 37. Heb. 6. 1. 1 Cor. 2. 6, 7. 2 Cor. 13. 11.

Ans.

To whom I will say with our Saviour, *Yea err not knowing the Scripture.* I challenge all the *Quakers* on Earth, and all the *Quakers* in Hel to give a sober and solid answer to these texts of Scripture.

Eccle. 7. 20. *There is not a just man upon earth that doth good, and sinneth not.*

2 1 Reg. 8. 46. Pro 20 9. *If they Sin against thee; for there is no man that sinneth not. Who can say I have made my heart clean?* I am pure from my sin?

These and the like places of Scripture are Cannon shot, able to batter down that *Babel* of confusion these men rear up to themselves, the Doctrine of perfection & a sinless condition attainable in this life, which never the best of Saints attained unto. *Paul* that was one of the chosen of Saints, as it appears by those aboundance of revelations that God shewed to him above the rest of his fellow Disciples, yet confesseth plainly, though he might *have confidence in the flesh*, And saith he, *if any man thinketh that he hath whereof he might trust in the flesh, much more I*, yet desireth *not to be found in his own rigteousness*; Or that he thought himself allready perfect, but pressed *hard towards the mark of the high calling of Jesus Christ.*

Phil. 3 4 v. 9. v. 12, 13, 14.

And if it may be that the eyes of these mens understandings may be at last opend to see this soul-damning sin of *pride* in them, I shall only put them in minde of several Saints and holy men of God before Christs comming, & since, that abhorred this conceipt of being *perfect*, and confessed that sin still remained in them, till death parted their soules and bodys asunder, they had never sin parted perfectly from their souls.

What will these men say of those Primitive Fathers, *who lived by Faith*, and dyed in Faith, a sign that corruption, and the body of sin was not wholy subdued whilst they were here?

Heb. 11. 63

What shall we say of old *Iacob*, who on his very death-bed makes this confession, *I have waited for thy Salvation O Lord*? not looking for perfect sanctification till death; the like may be said of *Nehemiah, Ezra, Daniel*, &c. What humble acknowledgment made they of their sins to God? which shews plainly, they did not conceipt themselves *perfect*. *Agur* was an exceeding wise and knowing man, yet he professeth, that he had

Gen. 49. 18.

not

not the knowledge of a man in him.

David a holy and pretious Saint yet professeth *that he was not puft up*, the meaning is, that he had no high conceipt of himself, but he was in this respect *as a beast before God.* Ps 131. 1. Ps. 73. 22.

And the like may be said of *Iob*, *Hitherto I heard thee by the hearing of the ear*, q.d. I had some dark and remote knowledge of thee, I saw thee at a distance a far of, but now I have a clearer knowledge of thee, and what follows? *Now I abhor my self in dust and ashes.* How far were these Saints of God from acknowledging themselves *perfect*? Iob 42. 6.

And such as have been looked upon in our Church, as most eminent for grace and Godlyness, some whereof have dyed Martyrs, as *Philpot*, *Bradford*, *Cranmer*, &c. Have confessed themselves even at their Deaths, that they were vile, sinful and wretched Hipocrites, disclaiming all perfection in themselves, and confessing themselves hainous Sinners, and resting upon Christs righteousness only; so that howsoever their evidence was clear to their Justification and Salvation, yet were most sensible of the remnants of corruption abiding in them.

Our greatest perfection rests in this, that we see and bewail our imperfections. In respect of our *Justification* it is true, we are perfectly justified at once when we truly repent and believe. But in respect of our *Sanctification* we are not perfect till our last enemy Death be destroyed, when our Sanctification shall be perfected.

Which may serve in the first place to warn us all to watch our own hearts against that sin whereunto these natures of ours are so much inclined, this spiritual pride, that soul-damning sin that doth so much abound in our dayes. What though thou hast knowledge above many others, shall that which thou hast received lift thee up? and shall not thy wants and imperfections cast thee down? Have we not more cause to be humbled *Use* 1.

In the ſenſe of the one, than Exalted with a conceipt of the other? Our own garments are but rags, what cauſe then to be proud when they will never cover our nakedneſs? It is the righteouſneſs of Jeſus Chriſt as the garment of our elder brother that we muſt put on, if ever we look to receive the bleſſing.

2. Secondly, as this warns us of that ſin of *pride*, ſo it may ſerve to revive and chear up the hearts of the truly *Humble*, that are caſt down in the ſenſe of their own *Imperfections* and wants, that are ſtill complaining of their ignorance in the things of God, their hardneſs of heart, and their indiſpoſition and coldneſs in duties, how little they have profited in the School of Chriſt, and what a ſmall progreſs they have made in religion, and how far ſhort they come of others, theſe are the ſighs and complaints of the humble ſouls, they ſee nothing in themſelves whereof to glory and boaſt, as *perfect*, as that they ſee nothing but *Imperfection* in them.

Be not diſcouraged or out of heart, but conſider,

1. That that knowledge & thoſe beginnings of grace are ſound, becauſe it humbles thee, and makes thee ſo ſenſible of thy imperfections; ſanctified knowledge and true grace, makes a man the more humble, *Paul* was once a live, thought highly of himſelf, But afterwards he found that he was *Dead*.

2. Conſider, that that glorious recompence reſerved for the Saints, ſhall not at laſt be given to any for the meaſure of their knowledge and grace, But for the truth of theſe. *Maryes* good will in her box of oyntment, and the widowes two mites, were accepted of Chriſt, when greater gifts were not regarded.

Hitherto of the parties for whom he prayeth.

3. Cir. to whom he prayeth. The perſons to whom he prayeth, and at whoſe hands he beggeth the former graces are,
1. *God the Father.*
2. *The Lord Jeſus Chriſt, the Son of the Father.*

The

The first person is *God the Father.*

The Father.

The title of *Father* is attributed unto God either { 1. Essentially or 2. Personally.

I Essentially. Deut. 32. 6.

First Essentially, and so it is taken for the whole three persons in the Trinity, Father, Son, and holy Ghost. So here. *Do ye so reward the Lord, O foolish people and unwise, is not he thy Father?*

Secondly, The word *Father* is sometimes taken Personally, and so is taken and used for the first person in the Trinity, as here in this place, as also in divers other places in Scripture.

And this Title doth most properly belong to God, for these two Reasons

I

First, Because he is the *Father* of our Lord Jesus Christ, and that not as he is our Father, by Grace, and Adoption, but he is the Father of Jesus Christ by Nature, and eternal generation

And thus he calls Christ his Son, *Thou art my son, this day have I begotten thee;* And Christ calls him his Father, *Father glorifie thy Son.* And in this Sense is Christ called *The only begotten son.* Because after this manner he hath none other. *God gave his only begotten son, that all that believe in him* &c. Psal. 2. 7. Joh. 7. 1. Joh. 3. 16

2.

Secondly, This title of *Father* doth most properly belong unto him, Because by the grace of Adoption he becomes the Father of all the *Elect*, and in Christ is our Father. So testifieth Saint *John. As many as received him to them gave he power to become the Sons of God*, and again, *Behold what love the father has given unto us that we should be called the Sons of God.* And so doth Christ call God his Father, *I go to my Father and your Father.* Joh 1. 12. 1 Joh. 3. 1. Joh. 20. 17.

And this is very observable, that in the old Testament we shall find that God is usually called by this name and title, *The Lord*, as he saith of himself, *I the Lord*, or by his Prophets, *Thus saith the Lord.* And his people are called his Servants, *I am thy Servant.* Psal. 116. 16.

But now in the new Testament God taketh as it

were a new name upon him, and he that before was called *the Lord*, is now called *Father*. And the people that before were called *Servants*, are now called *Sons*, as Christ testifieth, *Hence forth call I you not Servants but Sons.*

John 15. 15.

Vse. 1. And this may serve for matter of comfort, and singular consolation unto those that are Godly: for what a dignity is this, that a person of so great majesty as God should vouchsafe us that honor to call us sons?

1 Ioh. 3. 1. *Behold* (saith Saint *Iohn*) *what love the father hath bestowed upon us that we should be called the sons of God.* If *David* marrying of *Sauls* Daughter did think it so great an honor to him, and to his Fathers house, how much more may we when we consider our selves with God? And what shall we render to the Lord for this benefit?

2. Secondly, The Consideration of this, that God is our Father and we his Children, should mind us of our duty: for if God be our Father and we his Children, how careful ought we to be to perform the parts and duties of good and obedient Children? To love him as a Father, honor him as a Father, obey him as a Father, that we give him no cause of complaint of us as

Esay 1. 2. he did of his people, *I have nursed up Children, but they have rebelled against me.*

God our Father.

Observe we farther from these words, How Saint *Iohn* speaking of God which is a *Father*, saith he is *our Father.*

Doct. All the Faithful have God for their Father.

Teaching us, That all the Godly, and true believers, have God to their Father This is Testified by Christ himself when he teacheth us to pray thus, *Our Father.* And again, *I ascend to my Father, and your Father*, and, *I shall be Father unto you, and ye shall be my Sons and Daughters.*

Mat 6. 9. Ioh 20 17 2 Cor. 6. 18. And thus holy men of God when they made their addresses to God, have represented God unto them under

the

the name of a *Father*. *Though Abraham be ignorant of us, yet doubtless thou art our Father.* And this is indeed the voyce of the Spirit of Adoption, when we can come unto God and cry *Abba Father*. The Scriptures are clear in this particular, to shew that God is our Father, and the believer his Son and Daughter by Adoption and grace. *As many as received him to them gave he power to be made the sons of God, even to them that believe in his Name.* And the Apostle witnesseth the same when he saith, *Behold what love the Father hath given us, that we should be called the sons of God.* The Scripture is full in these and the like expressions Esa.63.16 Ioh. 1.12

And indeed what property can be found in a kind and loving Father, that doth not abound in God?

First, Doth a tender-hearted Father, bear a Fatherly affection towards his child? much more doth God; great is the affection of a tender-hearted Mother towards her Infant, *Can a woman forget her child, and not have compassion on the son of her womb? though they should forget, yet will not I forget thee.* And *As a Father hath Compassion on his Children, so hath the Lord compassion on them that fear him.* *Reason* 1. Esa. 49. 15. Psal. 103. 13. Mal. 3. 17.

2 Doth a Father protect his Children and keep them from Danger? So is the Lord a shield to his, And *he that toucheth them, toucheth the Apple of his eye* Zach. 2. 8.

3 Doth a Father make provision for his children that they want not any thing that is needfull? *Take no thought* (saith Christ) *what ye shall eat, and what ye shall drink, or wherewith ye shall be clothed, for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things.* Mat. 6. 31

4 Doth a Father take care for Portion and Inheritance for his Children? Much more doth God for his Children. *Fear not little flock, it is your Fathers good pleasure to give you a Kingdom.* Yea he hath provided for them an *Inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, that fadeth not.* So that you see what a Father God is to his Children in every respect, he doth not keep so ill an house that any Luk. 12. 32 1 Pet. 1. 4.

of his Children should lack any thing that is good for them.

Isa 1. First then, Seeing that all the faithful have God for their Father, This may serve to unite the hearts of believers together in love as Children of one Father, *Let not us strive* (saith *Abraham* to *Lot*,) *for we are Brethren. O what a joyful thing is it for Brethren to dwell together in unity!* O consider, have we not all one Father? Have we not all one Elder Brother? Have we not all one Spirit, one Faith, one Baptism, one Bread to feed upon, one Cup to drink on? Where then is that love that ought to be amongst Brethren?

Surely the sad Divisions in England this day cause *great thoughts of heart*. Our Divisions are multiplied, and our rents daily increase amongst us. And when will the end of these things be?

Psa. 2. 2. Act. 4. 27. Psal 84 5, 6. Those that are of the family of the Devil, Drunkards, Blasphemers, Riotous, and Prophane persons, these hold together, and assemble themselves together. But where is that love of those that profess themselves members of Gods family, amongst those that profess themselves his Children? O that such would but consider

Rom. 16. 17. that place of the Apostle *Paul*, *Now I beseech you Brethren mark them which cause Division and offences contrary to the Doctrine which ye have learned, and avoyd them, for they are such as serve not the Lord Jesus Christ, but their own bellies.*

2. Secondly, Are all believers the Sons and Daughters of God, and have God for their Father? Of what high dignity and honorable calling then is a believer? They are the Sons of God by Adoption and grace.

Rom. 8. 17. And *being Sons they are also heirs, even coheirs with Christ.* Such are a precious people in Gods esteem whatsoever the world esteems of them. *The Lords portion*

Deu 32. 9. *is his people, Iacob is the lot of his inheritance.* They are

Mal. 3. 17. the Lords Jewels, *They shall be mine when I make up my jewels.* O where are our hearts that we do no more prize

this

this Privilege to be a child of God? Is it nothing to grow rich in grace? Is it nothing to have communion with God and Chriſt? Is it nothing to have all things work for our good? And is it nothing to abide in this Family for ever? Theſe and the like are the happy Privileges that belong to believers that are the ſons of God. This ſhould move all men to be Chriſtians indeed, as the higheſt advancement that may be.

From God the Father, and from the Lord Jeſus Chriſt.

There is one thing more to be obſerved from theſe Words, how the Apoſtle begs the fore-named grates from God under this name of a Father, and through Ieſus Chriſt.

Doct:

That in the very entrance into our prayers, God is to be repreſented unto us under ſuch Names, Titles, and Attributes, as ſhould quicken our Faith and hope that we ſhall obtain thoſe things we pray for. As God is a father, ſo he is to be apprehended of us, when we come unto him by prayer. If many general requeſts are to be put up, then ſuch Titles, Names, and Attributes of God muſt be uſed, as may perſwade us that we ſhall be heard in all. If ſome ſpecial requeſt be to be made to God, then ſuch titles of God are to be uſed, as may help the heart in that particular.

Doct. In prayer God is to be repreſented all in all in that we pray for.

When *Abrahams* Servant prayed unto God for good ſucceſs in his Maſters affair, he ſaith thus, *O Iehovah, God of my Maſter Abraham, I pray thee proſper me this day.* When *Peter* was to intreat God to make choyce of an Apoſtle in the room of *Judas*, he prayeth thus, *Thou Lord which knoweſt the hearts of all men, ſhew which of theſe thou haſt choſen.* So when David was to pray againſt the Enemies of Gods truth, he ſaith, *Thou Lord to whom vengeance belongeth* &c. Even ſo when he would excite others to call upon God, ſaith *thou that hearеſt prayer to thee ſhall all fleſh come.* So that in prayer it

Gen. 24. 12.

Act. 1. 24.

Pſ 94. 1.

Pſ. 65. 3.

it is an excellent thing so to conceive of God as may strengthen our hearts in a comfortable expectation of the thing we pray for.

And the Reasons are.

Reason 1. First, A wise Choyce of apt Names, Titles, and Attributes, to represent God by, doth argue knowledge of God, and wisdom to make use of his different Attributes, in both which the Lord delighteth much in his Children.

2. Secondly, This representing of God to the minde under his several Names, Titles, and Attributes, doth set the heart in order, works Awe and Reverence, Fervency, Uprightness, and Confidence in prayer, all which are requisite in that duty.

3. Thirdly, It is by this assurance that we come unto God as unto a *Father*. By the which *we have boldness, and accesse with confidence to God*. What was it that put boldness and resolution in the heart of the prodigal, but this consideration that he was to deal with a *Father*? *I will arise and go to my Father*. What though he had run riot, mispent his patrimony, provoked his Father to displeasure? all which no doubt begat in him wavering thoughts, yet this was it that put life into his resolution, he was yet his *Father*, and *I will arise and go to my father*. q. d. He is still my *Father*, and I am his Son, though I have offended.

Ephe. 3. 11.

4. Fourthly, It is this consideration that must uphold our hearts against all imperfections and defects of our prayers, that our very sighs and groans and chatterings are effectual prayers, and are heard of him when we can thus represent God unto us as a Father. What Father will send his crying Infant from his presence for that it wants, and the Father can supply? And is not God much more compassionate to his Children? Though we do but bungle at his service the Lord will take it in good part if we can but come in *Humility* in our selves, and *Faith in him*.

Use 1. This shews what a miserable estate and condition all

all ignorant men and women are in, that want the knowledg of God and his Attributes. Theſe in times of miſery and diſtreſs are deſtitute of the means of comfort and deliverance; ſhould theſe fly unto God, they come into the preſence of an Angry Judge, a conſuming fire. God ſhuts out their prayers, they pray not in faith, they conceive not aright of God, they behold him not a reconciled God unto them in Jeſus Chriſt, they ſee him not a God Alſufficient in thoſe things they pray for. O the miſery of all wicked and ungodly men, that whereas their only refuge is to fly unto God, that God ſhould now ſhut the door againſt them, and be ſo far from pitying them in this time of their miſery & diſtreſs, as that he ſhall laugh at their deſtruction. Pro 1. 28. What ſoul is now able to put to ſilence the voyce of deſperation?

Secondly, This may likewiſe ſerve for our *Inſtruction*. As we deſire to pray aright, *that we acquaint our ſelves with God*, as *Iob* ſaith, And with all the Attributes of God, that when we are to call upon him, we may make choice of ſuch particulars as may ſtrengthen our prayers, help our Faith, and make us more bold and confident when we make our adreſſes unto him. Sometimes we need to make uſe of Gods *Power*, ſometimes of his *Wiſdom*, *Mercy*, *Truth*, *Iuſtice*, &c. In all our wants and neceſſities, we ſhould labour to ſee fulneſs in God. 2.

The Lord Ieſus Chriſt the Son of the Father.

This is the Second perſon from whom Saint *Iohn* wiſheth the former good things to be given to this *Lady* and her *Children*, *The Lord Ieſus Chriſt the Son of the Father*. 2. Perſon.

Where Chriſt is diſcribed by two Titles { 1 A Lord. 2 The Son of the Father. 1.

The firſt Title here given unto him, is, *the Lord Ieſus Chriſt*. This Chriſt is the Lord.

This Honorable title of right belongeth unto him,
1 Cor. 8. 6. so we finde it often in Scripture attributed unto him. *Vnto us there is but one God, which is the Father, of whom is all things, and we in him, and one Lord Jesus Christ,*
Ps. 110. 1. *by whom are all things, and we by him.* So *David, The Lord said to my Lord.* i.e. The Father said to the Lord Jesus
Luk. 17. 5. Christ his Son. And the Apostles said to Christ, *Lord increase our faith.* And, *the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ,* &c. And Christ himself approves of this title, when he
Ioh. 13. 13 saith, *Ye call me Lord & Master, & ye say well, for I am so.*

Christ a Lord. Now this title of *Lord* doth most truly and properly belong unto Christ, because he is a *Lord* indeed, and *Lord* over us, and that four wayes.

1. *Iure Redemptionis.* First, Because it is he that hath Ransomed us out of the hands of Sathan, and from Hel, to whom we were once vassals and slaves: As in the law of arms where any are taken Prisoners or Captives in warrs, he was either to be slain outright, or else to remain a perpetuall slave to him that had taken him, except he were ransomed, and in case any were so kind and merciful to redeem him, the poor Prisoner stood bound to take and acknowledge him for his Lord and master, & serve him all his dayes.

Such was the state and condition of us all, We were the bond-slaves of Sathan: But our Lord Jesus Christ took pitty upon us, and payed our Ransom, and how was that? *not with Silver, or Gold,* &c. But
1 Pet. 1. 18. *with his own blood.* He therefore having bought us, and payed such a price for us, we are bound willingly, and cheerfuly to acknowledge him our *Lord.*

2. *Iure Conservationis.* Secondly, He is our *Lord* by right of *Conservation*, and Protection: for as he hath redeemed us out of the power of the Devil, so he doth not there leave us without any further care what becomes of us afterward, but he still watcheth over us, that we may well
Lam. 3 22 say with the Church, *It is the Lords mercy that we are not confounded.* So many are our spiritual enemyes, and such weaklings are we to resist them, that we were

never

never able to ſtand, no not a moment of time without his help.

Thirdly, Chriſt is our *Lord* in reſpect of ſpiritual marriage which is betwixt him and every faithful ſoul, for Chriſt hath coupled us unto himſelf in wedlock, *I will marry thee to my ſelf for ever: I will marry thee in Righteouſneſs, Iudgment, and Mercy.* 3. *Iure Matrimoniali.* Hoſ. 2. 19.

Now as in our marriages here in the World, the Husband is the Wives head, and *Lord*: Even ſo in this ſpiritual marriage which is betwixt Chriſt and his Church, Chriſt is the head and Lord thereof. *I will that ye know that Chriſt is the head of every one.* And, *the Husband* is the Wives head, as Chriſt is the head of the Church. And thus alſo in reſpect of the marriage, and Conjunction that is betwixt Chriſt and us, *he* is our *Lord*. 1 Cor. 11. 3.

Fourthly, In regard of that power and dominion he hath over all things: for to him all power is committed in Heaven and Earth. And he is our great Soveraign Lord of whom we hold all things, Bodyes, Souls, Goods, &c as in *Capite*, and during his own good will and pleaſure. 4. *Iure Dominii.*

Thus and in all theſe reſpects is Chriſt here held not only a *Lord*, But *The Lord*, κατ' ἐξοχὴν by way of Excellency and Eminency.

And as Chriſt is called a *Lord* a title of Dominion, So he is likewiſe called a King, Even *a King of Kings, and Lord of Lords.* Rev. 17. 14.

He is Lord of the whole World, and hath all kingdoms at his command.

He ſhall raign over the houſe of Iacob for ever, and of his kingdom there ſhall be no end, and again, *Let the houſe Iſrael ſee and know that God hath made him, both lord and Chriſt.* And thus are the Devils ſubdued through his name. Thus the Devils and wicked men their ſervice to Chriſt is coacted and conſtrained, whereas the Service of his Church and people, is free and voluntary. Luk 1. 33. Act. 2. 3. Pſal. 2. 8.

Becauſe he hath ſworn an oath if he be a *Ieſus* he will *Reaſ.* 1.

will be a *Lord* too: *Look unto me and ye shall be saved*
Esa. 45. *all the ends of the earth, for I am God and there is none*
22,23,24. *other. have sworn by my self every knee shall bow* &c.
and the whole seed of Israel shall be justified and glory
in the Lord. Every knee shall bow to me, every tongue shall
Rev 6. *confess* &c *He it is that goes forth Conquering, and hath*
the keys of the Bottomless pit.

2, The very end of Christs purchasing a people, was that they might be a peculiar people unto himself, and he be a special Lord over them, *Who gave himself for us that*
Tit. 2. 14. *he might redeem us from all iniqnity, and purge us to be a peculiar people to himself, zealous of good works.*

Let us apply this.

Vse 1. First, Seeing Christ is a *Lord*, and a *Lord* over us, It is then our Duty to acknowledge Christ to be so, Even a *Lord* as well as a Saviour. Many would willingly take
Ps. 2. 11. Christ for a Saviour; who would not be ruled by Christ? But know, *that God hath made him Lord and Christ.* As Christ to free us from our deserved condemnation, so a Lord to free us from our vain Conversation. Many men in word will acknowledge
Tit. 1. 16. Christ be the *Lord, They profess they know God, but by their works they deny him*, mens lives say plainly *We will not have this man rule over us*; Our lusts shall rule us; *let us break their bonds* &c. In what a sad condition are many, that will call Christ *Lord*, yet will sell him for a base lust, as *Iudas* did? call him Lord, yet Swear vainly and profanely by his name? call him Lord and prophane his Sabbaths? call him Lord yet trample his blood under their feet, Crucifie him afresh, and reject his Laws and Government? what do these men but even bring upon themselves swift damnation, *Denying the Lord that bought them? Why*
Luk. 6. 46 *call ye me Lord and Master* (saith Christ) *and do not the things that I command you?*

But especially this may be a terror to the enemies of the Church, that set themselves against the Lord Jesus Christ, that hath undertaken for his Church, can these

prospe

prosper and prevail? yes, When they can scale the walls of Heaven, and put Christ to the worst, then and not till then shall the plots and secret contrivances of the Churches enemies prevail. *Pharaoh* may for a time think to deal witely, but what became of his wisdom and policy against the Church, and people of God? did it not turn to his own utter ruin at last? *Haman* layd a most bloody plot for the ruin of the Church, but therein he did but pave the way to his own utter ruin and destruction. The Papists are still at work and never more than at this day, to build up their *Babel* and to set up the Kingdom of *Antichrist*, but *Babylon is fallen, she is fallen*, their ruin and destruction is as sure and certain as if it were allready accomplished. *It is a righteous thing with God to recompence tribulation to them that trouble you.* And howsoever it is true the Enemies of the Church may seem to prosper for a time, and make the Saints drink deep of the cup of affliction, they shall know that the dregs thereof themselves shall suck up: for Christ is the *Lord* of his Church that will protect it. 2 Thes. 1. 6.

Secondly, Is Christ a *Lord*? yea our only *Lord* and Master? make reckoning then that one day we are to give up account to him. Servants must give up their reckoning & account to their Lord. So must we to Christ of all that we have don. *We must appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that every one may receive the things that he hath don in his body, whether they be good or evil.* For we are but Servants, and use that which is our Lords, and not our own. Hast thou Wisdom, Riches, Honor, Authority, &c? Hast thou one Tallent, two Tallents, or ten Tallents? look to it how thou usest them, for thou must one day give up account to this *Lord*. 2. 2 Cor. 5. 10.

Thirdly, Is Christ a Lord over all? then are we taught to hold our selves contented with any thing he shall do unto us, and submit our selves to his will and pleasure. So old *Eli*, when the Lord threatned de- 3.

struction

struction to him, and his whole Family, quietly submit himself, *It is the Lord, let him do as pleaseth him.* Thus *David* in the time of sore affliction, when Gods hand was gon out against him, *I was Dumb and opened not my mouth, because it was thy doing.* And the same affection ought to be in us, in all estates, Sick or Well, Rich or Poor, in Prosperity or Adversity. He is the Soveraign Lord of all, and may do with all as it pleaseth him.

1 Sam. 2. 18.
Ps 39.

The Son of the Father.

2. Title given to Christ, Son of the Father.

The Second Title here given to Christ is, *The Son of the Father.*

Now that Christ was the Son of God the Father, is plain in Scripture, *My Father worketh hitherto, and I work*; thus Christ calleth God his Father. God again calls Christ his Son, *This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased.*

Joh. 5. 17.
Mat. 3. 17.

Now Christ is said to be the Son of God the Father, not as we are his Sons, and children by grace and Adoption, but by generation, being begotten of the Father before all Worlds, Coeternal, and Coessential with him: So that Christ partaketh of the very Substance of his Father, & of his Essence. Whereas we are indeed partakers of the Divine Nature, but not by communication of the Essence of God, but by participarion of his graces.

A mystery indeed so deep, and unutterable, that the Prophet *Esay* could not but wonder at it saying, *Who can declare his generation?* A mystery it is that goes beyond our understanding, How the Son that was begotten should be Coeternal and Coessential with the Father who begat him. A mystery indeed to be admired, adored, believed, but in no wise curiously to be pried and searched into. An Article of our Faith to be believed not disputed.

Esay 53. 8.

Only whereas our Apostle doth beg for the fore-named graces From God the Father and that in and through

through *Iesus Christ* his *only Son.*

That we may observe is,

That as God the Father is the Fountain from whom all grace doth Flow: So the Conduit-pipe as it were by whom these graces are conveyed unto us, is *Jesus Christ.* *Doct.* All good things convayed unto us in Christ.

And this is true if we take a view of the particular graces of God, all come unto us through Christ.

1. Peace with God. The Apostle shews that this comes from God in Christ, *The peace of God which passeth all understanding shall preserve your hearts and minds in Christ Iesus.* Phil. 4. 7.

2. That we have aeceſs into the presence of God the Father. This is a singular blessing, this cannot be but by Jesus Christ, *Through him we have an entrance unto the Father by one Spirit.* Ephe. 2. 18.

3. Wisdom and understanding in heavenly things is an excellent grace of God, yet by Christ given and convayed unto us, *He hath abounded unto us in all wisdom and understanding* &c. Ephe. 1. 8.

4. The Eternal salvation of our Souls and Bodyes, is an excellent favour, no tongue is able to expreſs it. The Apostle saith, that *Eternal life is the gift of God through Iesus Christ.* And it is *he that is made of God for us, Wisdom, Righteousneſs, Sanctification, and Redemption*: all these graces come from God through Christ. And therefore the Prophet when he speaks of the great joy that shall come to the Church, he gives this Reason, *For unto us a Child is born, unto us a child is given.* Rom. 6. 23. 1 Cor. 1. 30. Esay 9. 3.

Yea all spiritual blessings whatsoever we receive from God, it is through Jesus Christ, that is as it were the Conduit pipe by whom the same is convayed unto us. *Blessed be God, & the Father of our Lord Iesus Christ, which hath blessed us with all Spiritual blessings in heavenly things in Christ.* Rom. 5. 21. Ephe. 1. 3.

Reason.

Christ Merited all these Spiritual good things for his Church, from the hands of God his Father. *Reason* 1.

He took upon him the form of a Servant, to this very
Phil. 2.7. end, that we might become the Lords freemen. *He be-*
1 Co. 8.9 *came poor,* to make us rich, *He was tempted that he might become our mercifull high Priest.* Yea *he was made sin for us that knew no sin, that we might be made the Righteousness of God in him.*

2 Secondly, All outward blessings, as they are blessings unto us, flow from this blessing of all blessings the Lord Iesus Christ, *All things are yours, and ye are Christs,* otherwise they are but blessings of Gods left hand, a man may have them, yet perish with them without Christ.

Vse 1. It is for *Instruction,* not to content our selves with any thing that we have and injoy, until we injoy Christ, since it is by him that all good things are conveyed unto us. All Spiritual good things are intailed to Jesus Christ, and come to us through him. Wantest thou any gift or grace whatsoever? behold here unto whom to go, go to God the Father as the Author and Fountain of all grace, and that in and through Jesus Christ as the Conduit-pipe in whom, through whom, and by whom all graces are conveyed unto us. So saith our Saviour himself, *Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father*
Iohn 16. 23. *in my name, he shall give it you.* And for this cause this Clause is well added, and so ought to be in the conclusion of all our prayers, *Through our Lord Iesus Christ.*

2. Secondly, This may comfort the Children of God, in that they need not call into question Gods favour and love, because of their want of outward things, as health, peace, riches, liberty &c. Gods special love standeth not in these things, not in the Dew of heaven, nor fatness of the earth, these things are not alwayes the portion of the Godly. But the Lord is their portion, and he doth often scant his children in these things that they may know that his love stands not in them. If thou hast Christ this is enough to stay thy heart upon til thou comest to heaven. Say then I have enough since the Lord hath given me Christ; though I be poor

yet

yet blessed be God he hath given me Christ, though I be friendless, cold, naked, harborless, yet I have Christ which makes amends for all.

Thirdly, Seeing it is by Jesus Christ as the Conduit-pipe from whom all spiritual graces proceed; Hence such as have partaken of these graces, may learn to whom to return thanks, *For of him, and through him, and for him, are all things, to whom be glory for ever, amen.* Rom. 11. 36. 3.

Hitherto of the *Salutation*, the first general part of this Epistle.

Ver. IV.

I Rejoyced greatly that I found thy Children walking in the truth, as we have received a Commandement of the Father.

AT this verse beginneth the Matter or Substance of this Epistle.

Wherein we have four particulars.

1. The Apostle professeth his great joy he conceived for the Piety, Zeal, and Godliness he found and observed in this *Lady* and her *Children*, v. 4.
2. He exhorteth them to Christian love and charity. v. 5.
3. He Explains himself what he means by love, v. 6. viz. to walk after the commandments of God.
4. In as much as many Deceivers and false Teachers were crept into the Church, and beguiled many, and drew them from the faith of Jesus Christ, he exhorteth them to beware of such, & to continue constant unto the end. v. 9, 10.

First, He professeth his great joy he had conceived for the Piety, Zeal, and Godlines, that he found and observed in this *Lady* and her *Children*, *I rejoyced greatly when I found thy Children walking in the truth.*

q.d. O Lady, it much comforted & rejoyced my heart, when I found thy Children treading in their Mothers steps, and perceived such young ones as they are, all professing the Religion of Christ, and leading their lives according to the rule of the word. For this is to walk in the truth.

So that the words contain in them the Apostles Exultation, *I rejoyced greatly.*

Together with the Reason or cause thereof, *When I found thy children walking in the truth.*

It is a true rule both in *Philosophy* and *Divinity*, that the affections of the mind, as *Love*, *Joy*, *Fear*, *Anger*, &c. are in their own natures neither absolute good, nor simply evil, but either good or evil as their object is. As for example, to be angry or not angry is a thing indifferent in it self; *Be angry and sin not.* There is an anger then that is not sinful: but saith Christ, *Whosoever is angry with his brother unadvisedly is guilty* &c. So then there is an Anger that is sinful.

Ephe. 4. 26.
Mat. 5. 22.

So likewise to *Rejoyce* or not to rejoyce is in it self a thing indifferent, neither good nor evil: But to rejoyce in vanity, in doing evil, as is common in the world, is an unlawful *Rejoycing.* And such as thus rejoyce shall weep and wayl in the end.

Whereas if the object of our joy and rejoycing be good, as

Phil. 4. 4. If a man rejoyce in the Lord, as *Paul* did.

Luk. 1. 47 If a man rejoyce in Christ our Saviour, as *Mary* did.

Luk 10 20. If any man rejoyce that his name is written in the book of life, as the Disciples did. Or if a man rejoyce for others that they walk in the truth, as Saint *John* doth here; This is a good, a lawful, and a commendable kind of rejoycing.

I

I rejoyced greatly when I found thy Children &c.

Doct. We ought greatly to rejoyce at the Spiritual good of others.

From the Example of the Apostle in this place we are taught,

That it is the Duty of all Christians especially of the Ministers of Christ, to rejoyce and be glad, when they see, or know, or hear, that professors grow and increase in heavenly graces. It is a matter of great joy & comfort to see, and to hear, men grow in grace, and increase in heavenly gifts.

The very Angels themselves rejoyce at the Conversion of a sinner; how well becometh it then the just to rejoyce and to bless God? Luke 15.

When *David* saw the forwardness of the people in offering unto the Lord, the Text saith *He rejoyced exceedingly and blessed the Lord.* 1 Chr. 29. 10.

And again, *rejoyced greatly when they said, let us go up to the house of the Lord.* So when *Paul* declared to the Churches the Conversion of the Gentiles, the text saith that *he caused great joy to the brethren.* Psal. 122. 1. Act. 15. 3.

And thus was it with our Apostle here, *He rejoyced when he found this Ladies Children walking in the truth*, that is to speak in the language of our times, Saint *John* found them a company of Puritans.

So that the poynt is clear and plain, That it is the duty of every Minister of Christ, and of all true Christians, greatly to rejoyce at the Spiritual good of others. And it must be so if we consider,

Reason 1. First, It is the greatest comfort to Pastors or Teachers of the word when they see & take notice that those that are their hearers, and depend upon them, do grow in grace and prosper under the means, The Apostle calls the *Philippians Brethren beloved and longd for, his joy and crown.*

It is a great joy to the Husband-man, after all his great labours and pains, to see the fruit of his labour. So is it with the spiritual Husband-man. And what greater grief to a Godly Minister when after all his

labours and pains in the ministry, his watchings and labours in tilling the dry and barren soyl of mens souls, they see little or no increase, but rather a crop of briers, and thorns, that are reserved for the fire of Gods wrath at last?

2. Secondly, By this means the glory of God is increased: and this should comfort the hearts and rejoyce the spirits of the Saints. Gods glory should affect us above all things. 2 Thes. 3. 1, 2.

3. The forwardness of one is a notable means to draw on others; for as one wicked man is a means to draw on another to wickedness; So is it the property of true grace, that when a man is converted himself, he rejoyceth to be an Instrument to draw on others to God.

4. Fourthly, The general good of the Church should lead us to this Duty. We pray *thy Kingdom come*: Now when Gods Kingdom is increased by the adding of Souls thereunto, who cannot but conceive matter of joy and rejoycing?

And lastly by this means the Kingdom of Sathan is battered down, and the Kingdom of Christ is erected in the souls and Consciences of men.

To Apply this.

Use 1. This shews how far such are from the spirit of Saint *Iohn*, and approving themselves faithful Ministers of Christ, that are so far from rejoycing at the spiritual welfare of their Flock, and the increase of grace in any, as they grudg and repine at such, look upon them with an envious eye, yea stick not to say they rejoyce that they have few or no Puritans in their parish, as some have said; Nay can with more patience indure Drunkards, and Blasphemers, and the vilest persons, than to indure a strict Godly Christian to live under them, and so far are they from rejoycing in them or incouraging them in a Godly course, that in what they may or can they dishearten, and discourage them. These are far from the spirit of Saint *Iohn*, who so greatly

greatly rejoyced to see the Zeal, Piety, and Godlyness of others.

And within the compass of this reproof are those who are so far from gladding the hearts of the Righteous by the fruits of grace in them, as that rather they sad the hearts of the Godly, by their fallings off from their first love, and their declinings in the wayes of grace and Godlyness. The Lord knows in these Apostatizing times we have many such; there are amongst us, that a man would have thought he might have ingaged his life, and almost have pawned his own soul for their Sincerity, who are now quite fallen off in their love to the Ministers of the word whom before they loved and reverenced, and falln off from their love to the Saints, and falln off from their Zeal and forwardness in good duties &c. And now are fallen into Sects & Heresies, some to one vile opinion some to another; Some *Quakers*, some *Anabaptists*, some like *Ranters*, to gross & scandalous sins; That in stead of rejoycing the hearts of the Saints, they are a grief to their souls. These decayings in grace and declinings in Godlyness will cost such dear one day.

Secondly, Seeing the growth of Spiritual gifts and graces in the Saints, adds matter of joy and rejoycing to the Godly; This may serve to stirr up every Christian to love others for the graces of God in them, and to rejoyce in them more for their graces than for any thing whatsoever. 2.

Many Parents you shall have that rejoyce in their Children for their towardlines, frugality, good husbandry &c. When these things without grace are but, as *Solomon* speaks of the beawty of women, *Like a ring of goldin a Swines snout*. This carnal joy and rejoycing of Parents in these things will end in mourning one day, one dram of grace in thy child is better than a pound of gold in the esteem of God and all his people.

Thirdly, We see here the principal thing that a 3.

faithful Minister of the word should seek after, viz. the profiting of the people, and the building up of the Kingdom of Christ in his flock, for his joy is their growth, and his comfort is their conversion. There is no comfort to a Minister like this comfort, when he seeth the fruit of his labours, and the work of Gods spirit upon the souls of his people, as a seal of his Ministry. And Oh unhappy he that hath had the Charge of a flock, that cannot say at last, *Here come I Father with these whom thou hast given me.* There is no comfort to this comfort, no joy to this joy, to behold the Lords harvest to flourish and increase. This was it that made Saint *John* here so to rejoyce, to see timely work of grace in this *Ladies Children*, *I rejoyced greatly* &c. And this was it that made the Apostle Saint *Paul* so to rejoice for the *Colossians* for their *Faith and love.*

The Lord knows we live in decaying and declyning times, we may clearly see a Consumption in the very heart of Religion, and many are almost afraid to profess that they believe, men are ready to wheel-about with the times, and therefore where we see any to stand fast to the faith, or any growth in Godliness, we ought to bless God for it, and rejoyce in it.

4. Fourthly and lastly, If there be such joy and comfort to be found in a Christian course here? What joy & comfort may we expect hereafter? If on Earth, what in Heaven? If the seed-time be so joyous to the Saints, what will the harvest be, when we shall come with joy, and bring our sheavs with us?

Hitherto of the general observation.

Now if we take a more narrow and strict view of of these words, we may therein observe these four particulars.

1. The persons here spoken of, for whom our Apostle doth so rejoyce, *Children.*

2. The Action, *They walked.*

3. The path in which they walked, *In the Truth.*

4. The Guide, after whose direction they walked, *The Commandements of God.*

As we have received commandment of the Father.

1 The Persons Children.

First, The persons here spoken of, for whom the Apostle so greatly rejoyced, these were *Children. I have found thy Children walking in the truth.*

Doct. A commendation for young ones to be Religious betimes.

By the example of these Children may all young men, and young women learn, even whilest they are young to submit themselves to the service of God, to walk in the *truth*, and to order their lives according to the word.

For this are the *Children* of this Lady commended, that they were observed to *walk in the truth.* For this was young *Timothy* commended, that was taught Religion betimes by his Grand-mother *Lois.* And thus taught *Abraham* his Children and his Servants the fear of the Lord; and young men are directed to order their wayes aright betimes, even by ruling their wayes according to the word; of this before in the 1 verse.

1 Tim. 4. Psal. 119. 9.

The Reasons are,

Reas. 1.

First, the word of God is directed to them, and exacteth this Duty at their hands, as of elder persons. So testifieth Sant *Iohn, I write unto you fathers, and I write unto you young men, yea little children, I write unto you.* Thus *Solomon* exalteth the young man *to remember his creator in the dayes of his youth.* And *young men and maids* are exhorted *to praise the Lord.*

1 Io. 2. 12, 13. Eccl. 12 1. Psal. 148. 12.

2.

Secondly, To see young men, and young women dedicate their tender years to the service of God, is a most lovely sight in the eyes of God and all good men. When Christ observed this in that young man that came to him, that he had kept the Commandements and that from his youth, the Text saith, that *Christ began to love him.* And *Pauls* heart was filled whith joy when he observed the timely faith and piety that was in young *Timothy.*

Mark 10. 20. 2 Tim. 1. 4.

3.

Thirdly, Such as begin betimes to lay hold on the wayes of life, do thereby gain to themselves much peace of Conscience when they are old. Whereas when

when the Lord doth open the eyes of a sinner to see his sins, and how much of his pretious time he hath spent in the drudgery of Sathan, the sins of his youth lye heavy upon his Conscience. Which made *Ephraim* to say, *I was ashamed and confounded because I bare the reproach of my youth.* And it was *Davids* prayer, *O remember not the sins and offences of my youth.* Now the means to prevent grief of heart and horror of Conscience when thou art old, is to apply thy self to the service of God whilst thou art young.

Jer. 31. 19

Psa. 25. 7.

It was a sweet comfort to the heart of *Hezechiah* to say, *Remember Lord I have walked before thee in truth and with an upright heart.* The like unspeakable comfort had *Paul, My rejoycing is in this, the testimony of my Conscience, that in simplicity and Godly pureness I have had my conversation in the World.* So *Samuel, Timothy*, &c.

Esay 38. 3.

2 Cor. 1. 12.

1 Sam. 12

Vse 1 This serves first of all to discover unto us, the wretched estate and condition of many young men and women in these dayes, who spend their youth, their strength, and flower of their age in profaneſs and in all manner of licentiousness, never applying themselves to the service of God till they be old, and hence it is that so many, as they have lived so they dye, of whom it may be said as it was of *Nabal*, that *his heart dyed as a stone within him.*

1 Sam. 25 37.

Object 1. But what tell you us of this Ladyes Children, they are dead and gon: Where have you a young man now adayes that is so zealous? and would you have us to be singular, and differ from all others?

Answer I answer, we are not to walk by example, but by precept. When the question was asked, *Where withall shall a young man cleanse his way?* The answer is made, not by doing as other young men do, But *by ruling himself after thy word.* By the word shall all at last be judged, and therefore by the word it is fitteſt that our lives be squared.

Psa. 119. 9.

Object 2. But what need a man begin so soon, when he comes

to

to be old, will not that serve the turn, and then to confess his sins and to cry God mercy, and is he not God of mercy then to hear him?

God will be served of the best, It must be a *perfect Lamb* that must be offered up to God. And what if God because of thy presumption, and abuse of his patience, do then give thee up to reprobate sense, and withhold his grace from thee, that when thou would'st thou canst not repent? O hear and fear that dreadfull saying of the Almighty, *Because I have called and ye refused, I have stretched out my hand and none would regard, &c. I will laugh at your destruction when fear cometh.* And that of the Lord by *Moses, He that shall bear the words of this curse, and shall bless himself, saying I shall have peace &c. the Lord will not be mercifull to that man.* Do but read the qualities of true Repentance set down by the Apostle, and consider how few of them we meet withall in a carnal, and secure soul. *Answer* Pro. 1.24. 26. Deut. 29. 19. 2 Co. 7. 11.

Secondly, This may serve for *Instruction* to all young men and women, but especially to the gallants of our times, that they would look upon this Ladies *Children*, who I dare say were better descended, than many of them are, let these learn by this example, even whilst they are young, to walk in the truth. This is true Gentry and Nobility before God. And all other outward privileges and indowments are but as flowers stuck upon a dead corps, where grace and Godliness is wanting. 2.

I have two considerations to propound to these men.

1. The Noble as well as the simple have received that corruption from their Parents, that makes them base and vile in Gods accompt, and which will make them miserable for ever if they be not *new born*. If we have not a new birth different from that first birth we have from our Parent, how Noble, or how honorable soever, we cannot see the Kingdom of heaven. Iohn 3.3.

2. The greatness of thy birth, and Parentage, if grace prevent not, will so puff thee up, that it will make thee

thee the more uncapable of grace and salvation than
1 Cor. 1. 21. others are that are of a low estate. *Not many rich, not many noble,* &c. *Not many* saith the Apostle, yet some, though but a few. So vain a thing it is *to seek*
Ioh. 5.44. *honor one of another, and seek not that honor that cometh from God.*

3. Let Parents then learn by the Example of this Lady,
Ephe. 6.4. to labour to frame their childrens hearts betimes to the yoak of Religion and Godliness. It is the Apostles advice, *Fathers bring up your Children in Instruction and information in the Lord.* And howsoever Godly and gracious Parents may have graceless Children, as *Adam* had a *Cain*, *Abraham* had a *Ishmael*, and *Isaac* had a *Esau*, that the world may see that grace comes not by Propagation, yet it is in the power of every Godly man to instruct his Child, wherein he shall do his duty, and shall have Peace and Comfort, though the Lord take no pleasure in him.

And indeed this is a good note of a Godly man, not to judge him by his profession abroad, but to follow him home, and to take the length of his foot there in his privat and family Duties.

Their *Walking in the truth.*

2. The Action. This is a Metaphorical and borrowed speech, taken from Travellers who use to walk & pass from place to place, from one place to another.

And the word *Walking* in Scripture ordinarily is used for the order and manner of a mans life and con-
Psal. 1. 1. versation in this world, as *Blessed is that man that hath not walked in the counsel of the Wicked*, i.e. doth not live according to the course of the wicked, and again, *Blessed are they that are upright in the way*, i.e. in their
Psal. 119. 1. lives, *And walk in the Law of the Lord.* And again, *Walk Circumspectly*, i.e. Take heed to your selves how
Ephe 5. 15. ye order your lives. Now from this Metaphor of *Walking* we may observe a double instruction.

First

First, This teacheth us what is our condition in this World, we are but *Strangers* and *Travellers* going on daily towards our Home. *Doct.* 1. Christians Travellers towards their home.

Heaven is our right home, and Country, for there is God our Father, there is Christ our elder Brother, and Redeemer, thither have walked & gon before us all our Godly Parents, Brethren, Sisters, Friends, and all that are dead in the Lord, and thither also are we *Walking* and travelling after them: There are two places of Scripture that make this out, and most clear and plain unto us.

The Saints departed are said *to be at home with the Lord*; and 2 Cor. 5. 8

Heaven is called an *Everlasting habitation.* Luke 16. 9.

By the which it appeareth, that whilst we are here we are not at home; And that Heaven is our place of everlasting abode.

And thus have the Godly ever esteemed themselves in this world, but as *Strangers* and *Pilgrims*; when *Pharaoh* asked *Iacob* how many were the dayes of the years of his life; He confessed that few and evil were the dayes of his *Pilgrimage.* And this *David* confesseth of himself, *I am a stranger upon earth, and a Sojourner as all my fathers were.* This *Paul* confesseth of himself, *I have fought a good fight, I have finished the course.* And those Primitive Fathers that confessed that *here they had no continual City, but did look for one to come.* Gen. 47. Psal. 39. 12. 1 Tim. 4. 7, 8. Heb. 11.

By all which it appeareth that we are here but *Viatores*; *Walkers* and *Travellers*: When we are born, then we set out, some out-goe others, and come to their journies end sooner, some later, yet all meet together in Death. And as are the dayes of the year, so is the life of man; Some are fair, some are foul: So is our race, some come to their graves, as *Iob* saith, with their bones full of marrow, others in the bitterness of their souls seek for death. And God will have it so.

First, By this Race that we are to walk, the Lord will have us to give proof of those graces he hath given us, as Faith, Hope, Obedience, Patience, &c. *Reason.* 1.

All

All which graces are now set on worke and exercised whilst we are travelling on and running our Race.

Our Faith in God.

Our Obedience to the word.

Our Patience in holding out.

Our Courage against all oppositions in our way.

All which graces are now exercised by minding ourselves but *Strangers* and *Travellers* to Heaven our home.

2 Secondly, That by the due consideration hereof that we are but *Strangers* and *Pilgrims* travelling to our home, we might be weaned from the World.

What Traveller on his journy will have his heart taken up with those accommodations he meets with in his Inn, or in the way, knowing that he is not at home, but in a strange place, to stay but a night or some short time, and then away? Had we any certain abode here, we would be ready to say with *Peter, Master it is good being here.* But now when we shall consider that we are but Travellers to another Country, and going to our home, where we shall abide for ever, This consideration should make us forget that which is behinde, and press hard to the mark &c.

3. Thirdly, This consideration will help us to minde more the prize we run for, and that kingdom we contend for, even the kingdom of glory; And that we might welcome Death when it cometh, since then we are at our journyes end, And if we have run well, we shall then receive the Crown.

Let us apply this.

Vse 1. The main use that we are to make of the poynt is this, to Exhort us all to look well to the way we *Walk in*, that we be sure it be Heavenward. *Many walk* (saith the Apostle) *of whom I have told you often, and now tell you weeping eye. whose end is damnation. Broad is the way that leadeth to destruction, and many there be that find it,* saith our Saviour, this way we can walk in without a teacher, and our feet are like to Hynds feet

Mat. 7.

to

to run such ways, ways that lead to death. *Their feet are swift to shed blood, destruction is in their wayes, but the way of peace have they not known.*

This is that way that hath so many passengers.

But to walk in this way, the *way of Truth*, with this *Lady* and her *Children*, we have great need of a guide, which made *David* so earnestly pray, *Teach me O Lord the way of thy statutes, and I will keep it unto the end.*

But how may I know that I walk in this good way, that I may hope to receive the prize at my journies end? *Quest.*

To do this, two things must be observed. *Answ.*

1 Vse the means, to know it.

2. Take special notice of those marks that thou maist know that thou art in it.

The only sure means to know the *Way* is the *Scriptures*. This is that *Good old Way* that we are commanded to *Walk in*. And if any man walk not by this rule, It *is because there is no wisdom in them*. This the Apostle *Peter* calls, *A sure word, to the which ye do well if ye take heed*. And *search the Scripture* saith our Saviour. And *all his paths are straight*. 1. The Means. Ier. 8. 9. Ioh. 5. 39.

Secondly, Thou maist know thou walkest in the good way, when thou walkest in that way that leads thee out of thy self. The way of God is a self-denying way, carrieth a man out of his Natural lusts, and those sins he formerly lived and delighted in, breeds in the soul pantings and breathings after grace and holyness, and closer communion with God, begets new desires, new joy, new hope, and new affections. 3.

Thirdly, Prayer is an Excellent means to direct us to this good Way. Naturally we are given to wander from this Way. As we are naturally ignorant of it: So we are ready to step out of it, which made *David* so earnestly to pray, *Lord teach me the way of thy precepts*. And that man that is a man of prayer is the man that walks the wayes of God. 3.

The marks are these.

First,

The marks.

1. First, Outward profession is one, though it be not infallible, yet outward profession is required in those that would be approved to walk in this *Way*; this is the very first step heaven-ward, and they that cannot away with the profession of Religion are indeed of no Religion.

2. Secondly, The good way may be known by this, It Mat. 7. is a *Straight way, Narrow is the way that leadeth unto life.* A Traveller Heaven-wards must not look to have his way strewed with rushes, but crosses, it is for the most part hedged in with *Mortification*, *Temptation*, and *Persecutions*: Whereas the way of the World that leads *Hel-ward*, is wide & broad, full of carnal pleasures and delights.

3. Thirdly, Thou maist know that thou art in this good way, by the fewness of the passengers thou meetest to bear thee company.

Few finde it, saith Christ, *Not many wise, not many Noble*, &c. For the most part they are the poor of the World whom he hath chosen.

2. Secondly, This Doctrine serves for *Admonition*, that Heb. 12. when we have found out this good way, *That we run the race that is set before us, and as yee have received Christ so walk in him.* There is no standing still or sitting down, *Be ye not weary of well doing, for in due time ye shall reap if ye faint not.*

Rules to be observed. And to this end these rules are to be observed.

1. First, A Christians care must be, to avoyd all the occasions of sin, as a wise Traveller steps over stones or blocks that lye in his way, that may be the occasion of his falling, and indeed for want of this care many a Christian hath fallen foully, and dangerously.

2. Secondly, If in our Christian Race we have stumbled and fallen it is most dangerous to lye in sin. No wise Traveller if he take a fall, but will up speedily and recover himself: So should we in all our slips and falls, 1 Reg. 8. 46. *For there is no man that sinneth not.* Yea *the Righteous man falleth seven times a day*; Yet by Repentance he recovereth

recovereth himself, as *David*, *Peter*, *Manasses*, &c. and is ever after the more careful to his steps; a very Beast will shun a danger.

Thirdly care must be had to persevere in our way, not to faint or to be weary. The wise traveller thinks of the evening of the day, and his Inn wherein he shall rest. Heaven should ever be in the Christians eye when he shall have rest. *Blessed are the dead that dye in the Lord, They rest from their labours.* What though now in thy journey thou meetest with storms and tempests, hatred, sorrow and persecution, yet Remember that Heaven is before thee, and when thou hast run thy race Death will put an end to all. 3. Rev. 14. 13.

Hitherto of the first Doctrine.

Secondly from this Metaphor of Walking we may gather this farther Instruction. *Doct.* 2. A progress in Christianity required in Christians.

As walking doth import a progress and going on in the way, so the Christian that hath once made an entrance into the way of godliness, must proceed dayly: A man that hath a journey of twenty miles to go, It is not sufficient that he go ten of them, but he must go on, if he intend his journeys end: So it is not enough to set out in the way Christianity, but it is perseverance that crowns the journey.

There is a progress and going on in the way of grace and godliness that is requisite in all that profess godliness. Their saving knowledge must increase in them, their faith must increase in them, their Hope, their Love, their Humility, their Zeal, their Spiritual Watchfulness, and all other graces grow and increase in them more and more. There is no standing at a stay, but the Lord requires that we should go forward daily towards perfection; the Author of that Epistle to the *Hebrews* exhorts that Church, not to rest satisfied *with the Doctrine of the beginning of Christ*, but to be led forward more and more towards perfection. *Paul* himself forgat that which was behind, and pressed hard to the mark of that high Calling. And when the Heb. 6. 1. Phil. 3. 13.

1 Pet. 2. 2. Apostle exhorteth the Church *As new born babes to desire the sincere milk of the Word*; It was to this end, *That they might grow thereby.* And this the Apostle
1 Thes. 4. 4. presseth upon other Churches. *We beseech you Brethren and exhort you by the Lord Jesus Christ, that ye increase yet more and more.* And hence is it that the Spiritual life of a Christian is compared to the several ages of man. Some are *babes* in Christ, weak Christians, such as have little in them, but a love to Christ, and a love to his children, and a love to Heaven, and Religion; Whereas others are compared to men of riper age, and their graces are compared to the Morning light, which shines brighter and brighter untill it be perfect day.
Joh. 15. 2 According to Christs promise, *Every Branch that abideth in me, he purgeth, that it may bring forth more fruit.* It is in Grace as it is in Nature, Every thing groweth from that which is less perfect, to that which is more perfect: as we see in Herbs and Plants, and Flowers, and other Creatures. So is it in grace, the Lord leads us on by degrees from grace to grace daily, till at last we come to be perfect in Christ; and such as are truly planted and ingrafted into Christ, These *bring*
Psa. 92. *forth much fruit in their age, and are fat and well liking.*
Psal. 1. 3. And hence is it that we have so many Exhortations in Scriptures to this purpose, to grow and increase in grace. *Let us not be weary of well doing, for in due time*
Gal. 6. 9. *we shall reign if we faint not,* and *let us be led forward*
Heb. 6. 6. *towards perfection.* We must take heed that we be not
2 Reg. 20. 11. like *Hezechias* Sun that went backward; Nor like
Ios. 10. 13. *Josuahs* Sun that stood still, but like *Davids* Sun that came forth as a Bridegroom out of his chamber, and rejoyced as a Gyant to run his course. And when we have done all that we can, and made the best proficiency that we can, in the way of grace and of godliness, say with *Paul, I count not my self perfect, but one*
Phil. 3. 13. *thing I do, forget that which is behind, and indeavour my self to that which is before, following hard towards the mark, for the high price of the high calling of Jesus Christ.*

And

And that there is a necessity of this growth and increase in grace, These Reasons shew.

First is taken from Christ the head from whom we receive supply of all grace. *It is of his fulness that we receive grace for grace.* As a living branch of a tree, receives sap and nourishment from the tree, so is it with the members of Christ. *Reas.* 1.

Secondly, If we do but look upon the Nature of grace it shews the necessity of the growth and increase of grace; there is nothing of a more generative nature than grace is. As the seed in the earth doth multiply of it self, so doth grace, and the more any soul grows in humility, and self-denial, the more doth grace thrive and prosper in that soul. *Paul* never grew more in grace than when he crys out *O wretched man that I am,* &c. 2. Ro. 7. 24.

Thirdly, a progress and going on in grace is requisite in regard of Gods promise. *To him that hath shall be given,* he that hath grace to him shall be given more grace. *I will be a Dew unto Israel and he shall grow up as the Lilly, and as the Palm tree,* yea it is said that such shall *bring forth much fruit in their age, and be fat and well liking.* 3. Hos. 14. 5. Psal. 92.

This Serves for the just reproof of those that are so farfrom honouring their profession with this growth in grace and daily Progress in godliness, that rather their sun is gone back many degrees, they are gone backward rather than forward, falln away from their first love. Have we not such amongst us that seemed to put out fair, were diligent hearers of the word, careful to sanctifie the Sabbath, in repeating of Sermons, Prayer, singing of Psalmes, and in edifying one another, Which since we have seen to have lost their love to Religion, and love to the Saints, and decayed in their zeal and forwardness in good dutyes, and which is saddest of all, are falln off to Sects and Heresies, some Quakers, some Anabaptists, yea and are haters and persecutors of that truth which once they professed? *Use* 1.

O that such would consider that when we are in an increasing and thriving way in grace, yet still we are unprofitable servants.

And if Gods people themselves have found by experience that all the grace they have got and obtained hath been little enough to support them in time of trial, when sickness and death, and times of temptation have come upon them; O how will these meet the Lord in a declining condition? How will these be able to answer Satan and their own consciences when they shall both lay this sin of theirs to their charge? This will break mens hearts one day and make them question whether they ever had the truth of grace in them yea or no, that find this wane and eclips in them.

Quest. But what may be the Reasons why such as have begun so well for a time, that have been such diligent hearers of the word, frequented the choicest of Ministers, repeated their sermons, have been Instruments to draw on others to the love and profession of Religion and Godliness, yet afterwards have decayed in their love and zeal, and falln away to sects and Heresies, some to be Quakers, some Anabaptists, *&c?*

Answer I answer, These things often come to pass in professors, especially in young men.

1 Because they took not up religion and the profession of it at first upon a good ground, neither laid they a sure foundation. *They receiveed not the truth in the love of the truth.* Some by-end, or base end or other prevailed with them at first that put them on to go so far: they did not dig deep enough in their putting out, and in laying the foundation, the Word never took rooting at first to bring forth fruit that afterwards so withered and came to nothing.

2 Thes. 2. 10.

2 Secondly, this thing comes often so to pass especially in young men, through negligence in keeping up their watch, and not frequenting the means where-

by

by they should be quickned, and not holding society with the Saints whereby grace is increased.

But the principal cause of the backsliding of so many young people in our dayes, is that spiritual pride and conceitedness of their own gifts. There is no sin that a young man, especially if he profess Religion, is more in danger of than *pride* of those gifts wherewith God hath furnished him. Yea this is a most dangerous sin, a sin whom God is said to *resist*, *He resisteth the proud*. *Pride* cast down the Angels out of Heaven, and it is pride that hath cast the Quakers out of his Church on earth. Their very Doctrine of perfection and a sinless condition that they have attained unto, shews little less than a Satanical pride in them. O that ever Satan and our own deluded hearts should ever so far delude us that we dare think to look God in the face in such a condition. Do these men never pray? How do they pray, and not make confession of their sins? Have we not much corruption within us? and carry not we about us a body of sin, that will never be subdued and put off but by Death? 3.

This is that sin that frustrates all the good which otherwise we might look to reap by the ministry of the word. It is this *pride* that will not suffer these men to hear at all; it is this *pride* that makes these men to turn their backs upon all the ordinances of Christ, and to be so full of *Envy*, *Railing*, *Surmisings*, *and perverse disputings*. This is the man (saith the Apostle) that is *proud*, *knowing nothing*. O that these men had but taken out this one lesson, That common gifts of the Spirit, such as are Wisdom, Knowledge, and Understanding, by the which these men seem to swell till they are ready to burst again, are such as they may carry with them to Hell if they have not more *Humility*, *God resisteth the proud*, *But giveth grace the Humble*. *The Humble he will teach*. Which is far from these people. 1 Tim. 6. 4, 5. Luk. 1. 46. Ps. 138. 6. Phil. 2. 5, 6. Psal. 25.

Thirdly, this Doctrine serves for the just reproof of 3.

of the servants of God themselves upon whose hearts the Lord hath been at work, that grow and increase, and go forward no more. Where is that progress in this grace and godliness answerable to the means we have lived under and have so long a time injoyed? the Lord knows we have been but bad scholars in Christs School, and have profited but little. Where is that growing more in Christ? where is that setling more and more upon the foundation? truly even the best of us are nothing to that we might be: we might have been taller Christians than we are by head and shoulders, we are many of us but Dwarfs, what greater dishonor to God and our profession? *Herein is my Father glorified that ye go and bring forth much fruit.*

Joh. 15.

Hitherto of their Action, *Their Walking in the truth.*

3. Part is the way which they walked.

The third particular is the *path* in the which the *Children* of this virtuous Lady Walked. *The truth.* Though all the people in the world be travellers, and walkers, yet all walk not in the same way, nor in the same *truth.* Our Saviour makes mention of two ways, a Broad way, and a Narrow way, a broad way in the which the greatest number of people do walk, and a narrow way that *few find.*

Mat. 7. 13.

Doct. Many walk in the broad way the way of Error.

Now whereas the Apostle testifieth of the Children of this virtuous *Lady*, that they *Walked in the truth*, He implyeth hereby, that there were many others that walked not in the same way with them, but walked in the broad way of sin and error; this is clear by that of our Saviour, *Broad is the way that leadeth to destruction.*

We need not seek far to find out these *Vagarants*, which wander out of the way of *truth*, and walk in the way of sin and error, the world swarmeth with these; Yet it shall not be amiss to point at some of them.

1. Temporizers.

The first sort are temporizers. Such indeed as are of any

any Religion, that religion that they find eſtabliſhed by Law, that they profeſs; And if the times alter, they change with the times. In the company of godly Proteſtants, they will be ſuch, and in the company of ſuperſtitious Papiſts they can rail and ſpeak evil of Proteſtants. Now the way that theſe men walk in, is the vvay that leadeth to Hell and Deſtruction, a way that God hateth. I may ſay to theſe as *Eliah* ſaid to the people of his time, *How long will ye halt betwixt two opinions?* And exhort theſe in the words of the Apoſtle, *Be ye no more Children Wavering and carried about with every wind of Doctrine*, &c. 1 Reg. 18. 21. Eph. 4. 14.

The Second ſort of thoſe that walk not in the *way of truth*, are ſuperſtitious Papiſts. Such as make a goodly ſhew of Religion and Devotion. But it is ſuch Religion & Devotion, as God no where commendeth, and therefore is not pleaſed therewith. Their going on pilgrimage to the ſhrine of this or that Saint, their kneeling before this or that Idol, their vowing of vvilful poverty, and ſingle life, their abſtaining from this meat and that meat, upon this day and that day, vvith their croſſings and creepings, the pixes and their beads, holy water and cream, aſhes and ſpittle, with a hundred of the like, all vvhich are the meer devices of mans brain, in the practice vvhereof theſe imagine they vvalk in a good vvay, and do the Lord good ſervice; to vvhom the Lord may juſtly ſay as to the Jevves of old, *Who hath required theſe things at your hands? They are a burthen unto me, and I am a weary of them.* 2. Superſtitious Papiſts. Eſay 1. 12

Theſe vvalk not in the vvay of truth, but in the vvay of error, and ſuperſtition. Is it not Gods expreſs command, *Ye ſhall not do every man what ſeemeth good in your own eys?* Let ſuch but conſider that judgment of God upon *Nadab* and *Abihu* the Sons of *Aaron* vvhen they preſumed to ſerve the Lord vvith ſtrange fire, other than that vvhich God had commanded, The Lord ſtroke them preſently vvith Death for their preſumption, Deut. 12. 8. Lev. 10. 1.

tion. O that all superstitious Papists would duly consider it.

3. Carnal professors.

Thirdly, Idle Protestants, such as profess onely, yet live unprofitably, that only say, and do not, that perswade themselvs that being baptized and comming to Church, and looked upon as Protestants, all is well with them, and in this *way* they are resolved to walk; a way indeed that leadeth down to Hell. For *O vain Man* saith Saint *James*, *Shew me thy faith by thy Works*. Indeed Faith alone shall justifie a man before God, but a naked faith can never do it.

4. Secure Christians.

Fourthly, Secure Christians whereof the world is full, such as by outward things judge themselves highly in Gods favour, because they prosper in the world, and meet not with those crosses and afflictions that others do; then were *Esau*, *Pharaoh*, *Saul*, *Herod*, and the rich *Glutton* happy men: But Gods love or Hatred is not known either by prosperity or adversity, God doth not usually strew this *way of truth* with rushes but with crosses.

5. Crafty Christians.

The Fift sort of vagarant Christians that are out of the *way of truth* are our crafty Christians, that pretend to know much, and will not stick to say they know themselves to be sinners, and they must repent and live holily, and they purpose themselves to do so; But yet with *Festus* they take a day with God, hereafter they think will be time enough, and with these conceipts they think to couzen God of his time, but herein they couzen themselves, and deceive their own Souls, and walk in the high way to destruction: For esse what meaneth those exhortations, *Seek the Lord whilst he may be found. To day if ye will hear his voyce harden not your hearts.* And *This is the acceptable time, This is the day of Salvation?* Which gratious invitations of the Lord, whilst some men have slighted and put off, God hath most deservedly cast them into Hell.

6. Civil honest men.

These are in the number of those that walk not *in*

the way of the truth, That have nothing else to boast of, and to rest upon, but their just and honest dealings in the world, Charity to the poor *&c.* And their negative righteousness these men much stand upon, they are no drunkards, swearers, *&c.* This they glory in, and with the *Pharisy* they thank God they are not such But such as rest here and have no other evidence for Heaven and happiness, undoe themselves for ever, and are vagarants from the *way of truth*. *Paul* would not for all the world be found in his own righteousness. And Holy *Job* did *abhor himself in dust and ashes.* And *David* cryes out, *Enter not into judgment with thy Servant O Lord.* And it is a Psalm of Mercy that the penitent *Publican* begs of God. Ps. 143. 2.

Hypocritical professors, that make a shew of *walking in the truth*, But without any soundness of heart at all. Some there are that are very diligent hearers of the word, as *Herod* that heard *John Baptist gladly, did many things at his request*, will approve and speak well of the *truth*: Yet with *Herod* they have an *Herodias*, some sweet sin or other which they will not forsake. 7. Hypocritical Professors. 1.

Some there are again that hear the word with much joy as the Stony ground, & as *Agrippa* are even ravished with the truth of the Gospel, and cry *Almost thou hast perswaded me to be a Christian.* And *Johns* Hearers *rejoyced in his light for a Season.* 2. Act. 26. 28. Joh. 5. 35.

They may have very tender hearts at the hearing of the word, be much affected for the present, but yet never truly wrought upon. Besides the common gifts of the spirit that may be given to these men: Yet never sanctified unto them. Such as of whom the Lord complaineth, that *draw near to god with their lips when their hearts are far from him.* Howsoever these may flatter themselves that they are in the way, and walk in *truth*, Yet the *way of truth they have not known.* 3. 8.

And Lastly, our perfect Pharisies the Quakers, who pretend themselves the only men that have found out Phanatiques.

the

the only way of *truth*, and walk in it, and that they only have the spirit of *truth* to guide and direct them, and all are vagarants travelling without a pass that walk not in their way; as if all the world lay in wickedness and quite out of the way till within these ten years, that *the Way of truth* came to be revealed unto them. As if Christ had no body, the Church no head, these Sixteen hundred yeares, till these perfect Saints sprung up amongst us. Whilst we look upon their spirit of prophecy now lately pretended unto, their new revelations, and that spirit they boast of to have within them, as meer delusions of Sathan, and they as miserable deluded people, whilst they lay aside the Scripture, *The ground and pillar of truth*;

Iet. 8. 9. *They have rejected the Word of the Lord, and what Wisdom is in them?*

Reas. 1. That so many walk in that *Broad Way* the way of error is not a thing to be wondred at, it being that hereditary disease that we had from our Parents. Howsoever *Adam* had at first a power of standing or falling, the choyce was in his will, which will of his by the suggestion of Sathan being abused, down he fell, and he left that good way of life, and made choyce of the way of sin and of death. In which estate all his posterity to this day now lye, so as we are not of our selves able to stand, but lye under a necessity of sining and swerving from that good way the way of *truth*.

2. Secondly as we are weak of our selves, So we have an engine at hand *Sathan*, who is strong and subtile, to seduce us & dravv us out of the vvay, and according to our several tempers and inclinations fits his temptations, and by this means vve are easily dravvn avvay. So that vvhen vve consider hovv ready naturally vve are to run, and hovv forvvard the Devil is to drive, it is no vvonder that vve are dravvn aside from the *Way of truth*.

Vse 1. This serves for the just reproof of such as trust too much

much to their own strength, and rest too much upon their own power. What a multitude of people are there that bear the faces of good Christians, yet wander from this *way of truth*, and are indeed in the high-way to hell and destruction? and the misery of such poor Souls is the greater because they see it not, but imagine they are in a good way, and think themselves safe. These of all men in the world are in the greatest danger, their very *pride* is the highway to their ruine. How secure are many, wilfully thrusting themselves into dangerous places? and exposing themselves to dangerous temptations, as the meetings of *Quakers*, even out of novelty, as if by their own strength they were able to stand, or as if Sathan durst not set upon them? whom God in his just judgment hath given up unto themselves to be deluded. How seasonable then is that Exhortation of the Apostle, *Be not high minded but fear*, And *thou that now standest take heed lest thou fall?* Rom. 11. 20. 1 Cor. 10. 12.

Second use is for *Instruction*, to those that desire to walk in the *way of truth*, that they labour to find out this *way of truth*, and walk therein. Now for this they need not seek any further than to the Lord Jesus Christ, for † *He is the way, the truth, and the life.* He is that unerring way, which if we walk by we cannot be deceived. 2. † Io. 14. 6. *Eamus post Christum quia veritas. Per Christum quia via. Per Christum quia vita.* Bern.

And having found the way, for our better continuance in the same, these Four Notable helps will further us therein.

First, *Determination*, or a settled Resolution, and purpose of heart to come out of the way of Darkness and of sin: And henceforth to walk in the way of *truth*. This was *Jobs* resolution. *I have made a Covenant* &c. This was *Josuahs* resolution, *Chuse ye whom ye will serve: But I and my house will serve the Lord.* This was *Davids* resolution, *I said I will take heed to my wayes.* And again, *I have sworn and am stedfastly purposed to keep thy righteous judgments.* 1. Determination. Ios. 24. 15. Ps. 39. 1.

Secondly

2. A holy indeavour.

Secondly, a holy *Indeavour* in life and Converſation to perform the former Determination and Reſolution, for it is not enough for a man to purpoſe it, unleſs he indeavour it. Many have had good purpoſes and reſolutions to come out of *Sodom*, to part with ſin, and to walk in new obedience of heart and life, but have not proſecuted the ſame effectually. This is not a work of Nature. If God withdraw his hand, what Apoſtates ſhould we not prove? *Paul* put forth his utmoſt endeavour in this, *I endeavour to keep a clear conſcience.* &c.

Act. 24. 16.

3. Supplication.

Thirdly *Supplication* and Prayer unto God to be confirmed therein, for that we have in us all a wandering vein, yea after we have entred into this way of *truth*. We deceive our ſelves if any of us think that that we are able to ſtand any longer than God aſſiſts us. That we are not left to thoſe damnable errors of theſe times, to turn our backs upon God his Word, and ordinances, and fall into damnable errors with others, no thanks to Nature, it is the Lord that keeps us. This the Saints of God have found in themſelves and complained off, *We have all wandred like loſt ſheep. I find another law in my members* ſaith *Paul*, And *I have gon aſtray as a ſheep that is loſt*, ſaith the *Pſalmiſt*.

Eſay 53. 6. Rom. 7. Pſal. 119. 176.

4. Conſideration

Fourthly *Conſideration*. That we carefully heed our ſelves, that we ſlide not out of this way of *truth*. For want of this it is that ſo many fall off that began well, and have proved fearful *Apoſtates* for want of this conſideration. We ſee a wiſe Traveller hath evermore an eye to the way, ever asking the way, and affraid leſt he ſhould miſs it. See *Davids* care herein, *I Conſidered my wayes, and turned my feet unto thy Teſtimonies.* And thoſe poor Jews that had embrued their hands in the blood of the Lord Jeſus, Theſe enquire *What ſhall we do to be ſaved*. Whereas ſuch as go on ſecurely and take up their religion upon truſt, theſe of all others are in the greateſt danger to err from the *truth*.

Pſal. 119. 59.

Act. 2. 37.

We

We come novv to the Fourth and laſt circumſtance propounded, and that is the *Guide* from vvhom the *Children* of this Godly *Lady* took their direction to vvalk in this *Way*. 4. The guide

As We have received Commandment of the Father.

We have heard before hovv divers ſorts of men vvalk in divers paths, and every one of them perſvvades himſelf that he vvalks in the *truth*, and is in the right vvay; And that others vvalk not aright that vvalk not as he doth. So ſaith *Solomon*, *Every mans way is right in his own eyes*. The *Turk* vvith his *Mahomet*, the *Papiſt* vvith his breaden-god, with all Sects and ſeveral ſorts of profeſſors in the World, all theſe conceive vvell of themſelves and think they vvalk in the *Way of truth*. Pro. 21. 2.

Novv mark vvell this text. Hovvſoever divers men vvalk diverſly, yet ſurely there is but one vvay, and that is layd dovvn here, the *Commandment* of God. *As ye have received a Commandment from the Father.*

The Inſtruction is.

That the *Commandment* and vvord of God muſt be the guide of mans life. So as vvhoſoever deſires to vvalk aright, and according to the *truth*, muſt ſo **Walk**, ſo Think, ſo Speak, and ſo Believe in all things, *As they have received a Commandment from the Father*, and as they are taught and directed according to the vvord. *Doct.* The word of God the guide of our life.

The Word, the Scripture, is that only true rule of Righteouſneſs by the vvhich our lives are to be ordered and directed. Nothing is a ſin but that vvhich ſvverveth from this rule, So nothing is a good vvork but that vvhich God in his vvord hath directed us to doe. We ſhall ſee this clear by divers texts of Scripture. Thus *Moſes* doth define true righteouſneſs, *It ſhall be our Righteouſneſs if wee obſerve and doe all theſe Commandments as he hath commanded us*. And again, *You ſhall obſerve to doe as the Lord your God hath commanded you, you* 1 Io. 3. 4. Deu. 6. 25.

Deu. 5. 32. *you shall not turn aside to the right hand nor to the left.* And *to the Law & to the Testimonies. I shall not be confounded* saith *David, While I have respect unto all thy Commandements.* And when that young man came to Christ
Psa. 119. with this question, *Good Master what shall I doe to in-*
Lu. 10. 25. *herit eternal Life?* Christs answer is, *How is it written*
2 Tim. 3. 15. *in the Law, how readest thou?* It was *Timothy's* great praise that he had learned the Scripture from his Childhood. This St. *Peter* calls *A sure word of prophecy whereunto ye doe well if ye take heed.* And *They have Moses and the Prophets, let them hear them*, saith *Abraham* to him in Hell. Our life and conversation in this world should be ordered as was the *Israelites* in the wilderness, the Lord went before them by day by a cloud,
Exo. 15. and by night in a pillar of fire. So for our direction in the good way, the way of *truth*, the Lord (blessed be his name) hath given unto us his word as a Lanthorn to our feet, if wee follow this light and walk
Jer. 8, 9. by this rule we walk safely, if we forsake this light, *it is because there is no Wisdom in us.*

Thus must every mans life be ordered according to the word, as that sure touchstone that must try all our actions, and by the which we shall all be judged at last. The Scriptures must judge what is right, and what is wrong, what truth, and what error, and all must keep silence to hear it.

Reas. 1. First, Because the Scripture is a standing rule for all men, what to believe, and how to be saved. *All Scripture is given by Divine inspiration* proceeding from God which giveth it being. *And is profitable*, that is, to teach and inform us what to believe, and what to
Luke. 16. 26. practise, to life and salvation. *They have Moses and the Prophets* (saith *Abraham*) *let them hear them.* Here the Scriptures are asserted to a more standing rule than any visions and revelations whatsoever. *If they hear not Moses and the Phophets, neither will they be perswaded though one rose from the dead.* So that *Moses* and the Prophets are not given us for a Cypher, But for a

Rule,

Rule, *Let them hears them.* And Christ and his Apostles brought no new rule into the Church for substance, but only cleered and inlarged it, and therefore whatsoever men say, Reason say, or Tradition or custome say, yet if against Scripture away with all. Act. 3. 24.

Secondly the Scripture and word of God must be the rule of our life, Because God hath not reveiled any other way or means (ordinarily) to bring men to Eternal life, and therefore, is said to be *perfect, converting the Soul*, and it is said, *to be the power of God to Salvation*, and *able to make us wise to Salvation.* Meditation, Affliction, the Sacraments, Prayer, all these are sanctified unto us by the word; it is the Word that is the *incorruptible seed whereby we are regenerate*, and until the Lord hath first said to a man by his Word, *Thou art my Child*, a man can never say unto God in his Prayer, *Thou art my Father.* 2. Psal. 19. 7. Rom. 1. 16 2 Tim. 3. 5 2 Pet. 1. 23

Is the *Commandement*, the *Scripture*, the *Word*, the Rule by the which we ought to walk and live by, *as* or according as *we have received a Commandement from the Father*; In what way do such walk then, that lay aside this Rule, the *Scripture*, the *Commandment*, the *Word*, and oppose both the Doctrinal truth of the Word, and oppose also the practical truths of it, as our Sectaries and *Quakers* doe? Did not *Paul* say, *Though we or an Angel from heaven Preach unto you, otherwise than that which we have Preached unto you, let him be accursed*? And St. *John* in this Epistle, *If there come any unto you, and bring not this Doctrine, receive him not to house, nor bid him God speed, &c.* *Use* 1. Gal. 1. 8. vers. 10.

But what are those Doctrines of the Gospel taught by Christ and his Apostles, which all must teach and hold forth, under the penalty of the Apostles curse? The Doctrines of the Gospel principally are these. *Quest.* *Answ.*

First, the Preaching of the Word, *I am not ashamed of the Preaching of the Gospel, because it is the power of God to Salvation.* 1. Rom. 1: 16.

Secondly, the Sacrament of Baptism, Go teach all Nations and baptise them, &c. 2. Thirdly, Mat. 28. 9.

3. Thirdly, the Sacrament of the Lords Supper, So of
1 Cor. 11. 26. *as ye eat of this Bread, and drink of this Cup, ye shew forth the Lords death untill he come.*

4. Fourthly, singing of Psalms, *Exercising your selves*
Col. 3. 18 *in Psalms, Hymns, and spiritual Songs.*

5. Fifthly, Prayer, as *Mat. 6. 5, 6. Iam. 5. 13.*

Sixthly, Discipline or Church order, so often prest by the Apostles to the Churches.

These are the principal Church ordinances held out by Christ and his Apostles; and if there be any other, it falls under one of these heads.

Now which of all these is owned by the Quakers?

1. Firſt, for the Preaching of the Word, is there one faithfull Minister of the Gospel this day in our Church that these men own? but hold that our Church is no true Church, nor our Ministers no true Ministers of Christ, but hirelings, wolves, &c.

And their gifted brethren, *Naylers*, plowmen, &c. yea in their absence, *Gil Impudence*, whom the Apostles will not permit to speak in the *Assemblies*; these must step up, and their raylings are taken for oracles.

2. For Baptism, is not this Ordinance of Christ laid aside by these men? their Children remain unbaptized.

3. For the Sacrament of the Lords Supper, have not some of them affirmed (to use their own words,) that they can find as much sweetness in other bread, as that on the Lords Table?

4. For singing of Psalms, that they lay aside, an Argument they were never acquainted with a Heavenly Spirit.

5. Prayer is out of use with these men, and whereas the Apostle saith, *That all things are sanctified by the Word and Prayer*, there is no blessing craved from God upon the Creature they feed on.

6. And for Church Order and Discipline, they are profest Enemies to all Order and Government in a Church.

Now

Now how will these men avoid the Apostles Curse when God shall lay these sins to their charge, and the Consciences of these men at last shall be awakened to see how contrary they have walked to the *Commandment of God*?

Secondly, this serves likewise for the Reproof of those which walk not according to this rule, the *Commandment of God*, but according to the lusts of their own hearts, that say, I will do this, and I will do that, not because they have received a *Commandment* from God, but give themselves liberty, because they will. O take heed of this, the way of thy own heart, that is ever a by-way, if thou follow it, and walk in it, it will lead thee to Hell, and bring thee to destruction. 2.

Thirdly, this serves to reprove a third sort of people in the World; And they are such who in their walking follow not the *Commandment* of God, but the fashion of the World, and walk in that way that is most beat, and most men walk in, be it right or wrong, they list not to inquire. This is against the rule of the Apostle, *fashion not your selves according to the World*. The World walks in darkness, and they that fashion themselves unto it, it sends them in the end to *utter darkness*. And hence it is, that the Lord Commandeth thus, *Thou shalt not follow a multitude to do evill*. It will be a small comfort to a poor damned Soul at last, that he hath store of company to go with him to Hell. 3. Rom. 12. 2. Exod. 23. 2.

And last of all the Church of *Rome* is here justly to be reproved, Who so walk, so live, and so believe, not as they *have received a commandment from God*, but as they have received a *commandment* from the Pope, from their Doctors and Councels, and from their Parents and Ancestors that have gone before them. 4.

The Apostle exhorteth, *Let every one be able to give a Reason of his faith, and hope that is in him*, And is this a good Reason of thy Faith, to say, I believe so as I do, because the Pope hath decreed it, or because my Ancestors professed so and so? Such as dye thus in any 1 Pet. 3. 15.

Heretical opinion, or any sin unrepented of, it will not avail them at last to say, I was so taught by men, when they have laid aside this *Commandment* of God.

This was charged as the great sin of the Jews, their Esay 29. 13. *fear towards me was taught by the precepts of men*, meaning thereby, that the people did worship him not as they had received a *Commandment* from himself, but as they were taught by men.

Take we heed then of any rule to walk by other Gal. 1. 8. than this, *As ye have received a Commandment from the Father*, yea though an *Angel from Heaven* should teach it us, But rather resolve to say with the Godly, mentioned by the Prophet, *Come let us go unto the Lord, and he* Mich. 4. 2. *will teach us his wayes, and we will walk in his paths.*

5. And last of all, Let this be to exhort us all, that we frame our selves, and our lives so, that we walk according to this Rule of *Truth*, the *Word*, the *Scriptures*, the *Commandment* of God. And that we take heed of all Errors and Heresies that oppose the Doctrinal truth of the Scriptures, as also of all Prophanness and Impiety that oppose the practical truth thereof. And such as walk not according to this Rule, are in a lying and damnable way. Take heed of being in the Number of Rom. 1. 18. those *who hold the Truth in unrighteousness*. But as many as walk according to this Rule *peace shall be upon them, and upon the Israel of God.*

Vers. 5.

And now I beseech thee Lady, not as writing a new Commandment unto thee, But that same which we had from the beginning, That we love one another.

THE Second thing wherein consisteth the matter of this *Epistle*, Is an *Exhortation* to mutual Love and Charity, *That we love one another.* The Reason whereby the Apostle inforceth this his *Exhortation*, is drawn

drawn from the *Antiquity* thereof, because it is no new or late Commandment, but a precept of great *Antiquity*, given and enjoyned by God even from the beginning.

Now this may be taken two wayes.

1. Either it was from the beginning of the World, and first Creation of man.

2. Or from the beginning of the Faith and Religion taught and prescribed by Christ.

After the first Interpretation, the force of the Argument is to this effect. Almighty God since the time he first Created man, required that we should love one another, and to this end, whereas he made all other Creatures by Couples, *Male and Female*, he made man alone; for the Woman was made after the man; to signifie that he would have all mankind as one, to love one another. This Law was afterwards renewed by *Moses*, *Thou shalt love thy Neighbour as thy self*; which being so, that this Commandment is so antient, we ought the rather to regard it, and *love one another*. Exod. 20. Levit. 19. 18.

If we take the words after the latter Interpretation, the force of the Argument is to this effect.

Christ Jesus our Blessed Lord and Saviour gave us this in charge, that *we should love one another even as he loved us.*

In the verse are three things.

1. The *manner* how he deals with this *Lady*, he beseecheth her, *Now I beseech thee Lady.*
2. The Reason whereby he perswades her, *Not as writing a new Commandment, but that we had from the beginning.*
3. The matter to which he perswades her, *That we love one another.*

The *manner* how he deals with this *Lady* to perswade her, is by intreaty, and beseeching her, *Now I beseech thee La.* 1. The manner is by intreaty.

Doct. Ministers must sometimes intreat and beseech.

The Ministers of the Gospel may hereby learn, how to deal with the people of God, not alwayes to thunder out the Judgments of God against them, not alwayes to speak sharply and bitterly unto them, but sometimes to beseech them, and intreat them; to see if they can by that way work upon them.

Thus deals *Paul* with *Philemon*, for receiving of *Onesimus* again into his Family, that had been a fugitive Servant, *Though I have much liberty to command thee, yet I rather beseech thee*, And *God doth beseech you through us*, and *we beseech you in Christs stead, that ye be reconciled to God*, And *we beseech you brethren by the mercies of God, &c.* And *furthermore, we beseech you Brethren, and exhort you in the Lord Jesus, &c.* Thus must every godly Minister, have as wel *ubera* as *verbera*; as he must have a rod to whip those that are obstinate, So must he have a *Dug*, to draw on such as he findeth more teachable, with the spirit of meekness. To those that are refractory, and obstinate he must be a *Boanarges*, a Son of thunder; but amongst those that are more mild and teachable, he must be a *Barnabas*, a Son of Consolation.

Phil. 8.

2 Cor. 5. 20.

1 Thes. 4. 1.

Cautions 1.

Yet in this Case two Cautions are to be observed.

First, that the Minister do not there intreat, and beseech, and use lenity, where the Case requireth Severity, Zeal and Courage. Namely, where sin waxeth bold, and hath put on a whores forehead, there the Minister must put on boldness. *Moses* that was the meekest man upon Earth, yet when the people fell to Idolatry, and worshipped a Calf in stead of God, In this case he cloaths himself with Zeal. And he that sometimes ought to speak with a soft, and still voyce, may at another time change his Coppy, and lift up his voyce like a *trumpet*. And for this the Ministers of Christ have warrant from the Example, and practice of Christ and his Apostles.

Esay 58. 1.

From Christ, who denounced a fearfull wo against the *Scribes* and *Pharises*, *Wo unto you Scribes and Pharises,*

ness, *How shall ye escape the Damnation of Hell?* Christ threateneth them with *Hell* and *Damnation*.

And how severely the Apostles deal with obstinate sinners, their Epistles to the Churches do cleerly shew; when the Apostle dissuaded from fornication, uncleanness, Covetousness, and other foul sinns, he tels the *Ephesians* plainly, that *No whoremonger nor unclean person, nor covetous person hath any inheritance in the Kingdome of God, and of Christ*, Yea, he stayes not there but adds further, *Let no man deceive you with vain words; for, for such things sake the wrath of God cometh upon the children of Disobedience*. q. d. if any tell you to the contrary, he doth but deceive you. Assure your selves, that such as live in the practice of such sins, *the wrath of God cometh upon them*. Eph. 5. 3, 4, 5.

The second Caution is, when gentle intreaty and Exhortation will not serve to cut off sin, but there is rather a rejoycing in it, and obstinacy in a course of sinning, in this case again the Minister is to denounce and thunder out the Judgments of God against them; So *Paul* who had so often intreated and besought; when he was to deal with the incestuous person, who had sinned in a high degree, he thundred out against him Judgment and Damnation, and gave him up to *Satan*, and charged others not to converse with such. 2. 1 Cor. 5. 2

Now that Ministers must sometimes intreat and beseech, the reason may be taken from the end of their Calling, which is to bring men to Christ, and so that this may be done, Ministers must become *All things to all men*, as *Paul* did, *if by any means he may save some*; wisely considering the temper and condition of those to whom he spake, there to exercise Lenity, where Lenity is most like to prevail; there to beseech men to accept of Christ and mercy, and to be reconciled to God; and to this end to shew them their miserable condition, whilst they remain in the state of sin, they remain in the state of Death. And withall to steer up unto them, the happy and blessed estate and condition *Reas.*

of such as are regenerate and brought home to Christ. And so to manage their Exhortations, that the Conscience of this man may be convinc'd, that it come in love and Compassion to his Soul. Thus may the Minister lay down his power for the present; but when he perceives that this course will not take, this man must know that this Minister hath power to command, and where the case requireth severity, he is there to use it.

use. 1. This shews what wisdome and discretion is required in a faithfull Ministers, viz. that he put a difference between Persons and Actions, and not to deal alike with all, the want whereof hath rendred both the persons of some Ministers unto Contempt, and their labours and indeavours insuccesfull.

2. Secondly, this serves for the just reproof of such people, who after many Exhortations and intreaties of their Minister, do still continue in sin, and yet cannot indure that he thunder out the Judgments of God against them. How many are there that complain of their Preachers that they care not for hearing of them, Because they say, they Preach nothing but Judgment and Damnation; But let such know, that if their sins grow bold, as the sins of this Nation do at this day, and the words of meekness, and of Exhortation, will not serve, it is then the Ministers duty to thunder out Gods Judgments against sin, unless themselves become guilty of their sins; and if the Lord for the sins of this Land should so far be provoked, that such faithfull Ministers shall be set a side, and their mouths stopped, they shall then be brought to see what a blessing they injoyed, whilst they had such Pastors amongst them.

And let all Ministers of the Word be provoked to their duty by these and the like considerations.

Ezc. 3. 1. The danger such are in who neglect their duty. *They shall dye in their sins, but their blood will I require at thy hands.*

2. In doing of their duty, herein they shall much glorifie God.

3. By

3. By this means they shall save mens Souls, build up the Church, and pull down Sathans Kingdome.

The second point observable is the Reason or Argument our Apostle useth to perswade her, *Not as writing a new Commandment, but that same we had from the beginning.* 2. Circumstance.

This Argument by which he perswades her is *Ab antiquitate*: because, this Commandement to love one another is no new Commandment, but such as hath been from the beginning.

Note in this Argument two things.
1. How this Duty of Love one to another is called a *Commandment*.
2. He sheweth what kind of *Commandment* this is.
1. Negatively *no New commandment*.
2. Affirmatively, *But that same*, &c.

First, the Duty of *Love* is called a *Commandment*, and so it is indeed: first, as given by *Moses*, *Thou shalt love thy Neighbour as thy self.* Levit. 19. 18.

Thus was it a Commandment in the old Testament.

2. This Duty of Love is commanded by Christ, and his Apostles in the New Testament; By Christ, *This is my commandment, That you love one another*; and again, *Thou shalt love thy Neighbour as thy self.* Ioh. 15. 12. Mat. 19. 19.

3. By the Apostles, As, *All the Law is fulfilled in one word, Thou shalt love thy Neighbour as thy self*, and again, *Owe nothing to any man: but this, that you love one another.* Gal. 5. 14. Rom. 13. 8.

And thus we see that both in the *Old Testament*, *Love* is injoyned by *Moses*, and in the *New Testament* *Love* is injoyned by Christ and his Apostles as a *Commandment*.

2. Here is shewed also what kind of Commandment it is, first, negatively, *no New Commandment*, 2. Affirmatively, *But such as hath been from the beginning.*

q. d. It is no novel or upstart point of Doctrine that I teach: but such as hath been taught ever since the beginning of the World, and from time to time hath been Preached by *Moses*, by Christ, and by his Apostles.

1. *Antiquity*, and length of time commendeth many things, Christ commendeth old *Wine*, and *thou shalt not remove the antient bonds which thy Fathers have made.*

2. Prov. 27 10. It commendeth Friendship, *thy own friend and thy fathers friend forsake thou not.*

It commendeth our dwelling places, and possessions,

3. 1 Reg. 21. *Naboth*, told *Ahab*, *The Lord keep me from giving the Inheritance of my fathers unto thee.*

Even so in Religion also, the more *Antient* any thing is, the more commendable, being according to the word. *Is verius quod prius*, that which is most antient is most true, and hence it is, that *Paul* adviseth *Timothy*, *Keep that which is committed to thee, and avoid prophane and vain bablings*, or rather, avoid prophane novelties of words.

Non dixit Antiquitates, sed Novitates, Nam si vitanda est Novitas, teneada est Antiquitas, Vincent.

So then if this *Commandment* of loving one another, be *no New Commandment*, but such as is of great Antiquity, as antient as the World, taught ever since the beginning of the World, and commanded by *Moses*, by *Christ* himself and his *Apostles*, we ought the more carefully to submit our selves to the practice thereof.

Quest. But how can this Commandment be said to be both *Old* and *New*, doth not this imply a contradiction?

Answer. It is in Scripture sometime called *An Old Commandment*, and likewise in Scripture sometimes called a *New Commandement*, in divers respects.

1. *Old* it was because it was from the beginning of the World, written by *Moses* the first and antient writer that was.

2. *New* it was because of Christ who lived four thousand

thousand years since the beginning, by whom it was as it were renewed, and made new.

Besides, it may be called *New* in respect of Christs fulfilling of it: for in, and by him, it was more perfectly fulfilled, than ever it was by any either since or before him.

For Christ out of the abundance of his *love* dyed even for sinners, his very Enemies, *Greater love than this hath no man, than to bestow his life for his friend.* Ioh. 15. 13. And yet behold, such was the love of Christ, that he gave his life for his Enemies, for *When we were Enemies, Christ dyed for us.* Rom. 5. 10. Here was *love* indeed, and such *love*, that the World never heard of before.

Again, this Commandment was *New*, in regard it was renewed by our Saviour; for though the Commandment was from the beginning, yet in time it grew so far corrupted with the false Glosses of the *Scribes* and *Pharises*, that all true and hearty *love* was (in a manner) quite worn out and banished the World. For whereas the Lord had commanded of old, *Thou shalt love thy Neighbour as thy self*, The *Scribes* and *Pharises* most corruptly interpreted it to be meant, that a man should love his Neighbour that loveth him, but if an Enemy, then to hate him. Levit. 19. 18. Mat. 5. 43.

Now our Saviour when he came he taught them another manner of meaning of that Commandment, and another manner of loving one another than so. *I say unto you love your Enemies, and pray for them that hate you.* Mat. 5. 44. And hence it is that our Saviour calls this *Commandment New*, being thus purged and cleered by Christ.

Hence we are taught an Excellent Rule for the stablishing of our Consciences in the Truth of Religion.

Doct. That Doctrine that is most antient must come

That which we find most antient, and taught from the beginning, that we may believe, follow, and imbrace as the truth. This Doctrine will be made cleer and plain, This Caution premised, viz.

That

neareſt the Truth. That that be taken for true *Antiquity*, that is Conſonant unto, and not repugnant from the Scripture, and is truly antient: for many Errors have crept into the Church that are of ſome Antiquity; yet having no warrant from the Word, but cleer Scripture againſt them, are not to be retained. This appears by thoſe Act. 15. 1. that taught ſaying, *Except ye be Circumciſed after the manner of Moſes, ye cannot be ſaved*, this was antient, yet abrogated by Chriſt under the Goſpel.

Thoſe corrupt gloſſes the *Scribes* and *Phariſes* put Mat. 5. 21. upon the Law were antient, *Ye have heard it hath been* 27. 33. *ſaid to them of old time, &c.*

And many of thoſe errors in the Church of *Rome* at this day muſt be confeſſed to be antient, and have a great ſhew of *Antiquity*; for the Myſtery of Iniquity began to work even in the Apoſtles time: yet not being agreeable to, but indeed clean contrary, to the word, ought to be abandoned.

And thus are many Superſtitious Cuſtomes kept on foot at this day that have no warrant at all from the word, but Cuſtome from our fore-fathers, as the Prophet juſtly reprehends thoſe Superſtitious Jewes, Jer. 9. 14. *They walked after the ſtubborneſs of their own hearts, and after Baalims which their Fathers taught them.*

And thus the Apoſtle *Peter* reproveth thoſe he wrote unto, that *their vain converſation was received by tradition of their Fathers.* Now we are not tyed to follow theſe, or the like Examples or Traditions of our forefathers, wherein they ſwerved from the Scripture, Eſay 8. 20. the Rule is, *We muſt to the Law, and to the Teſtimony*, and we muſt take *'tis written* along with us, in all things we do in his ſervice.

Now for the cleering of this Doctrine, that that we find moſt antient and taught from the beginning, that may we believe, follow, and imbrace, as the truth; this is cleer.

Jer. 6. 16. It is the Lords own Commandment, *Stand in the wayes and behold, and aſk for the old way, and walk therein*,

is, and ye shall find rest for your Soules. And the Lord calls the way of Error, a false way, *a way that was not trodden, they stumble in their wayes from the Antient wayes to walk in the paths, and way that is not trodden.* Ier. 18.15.

And our Saviour directing the Church, how to find the good way, bids her observe the *steps of the old Flock.* Cant. 1.8.

And those antient Fathers that should be of some Authority with us in matter of Religion, doe confirm this truth, declaring their Judgments in this point.

And this truth is cleered by that of our *Saviour*, that when the *Pharisees* came to him to know his Judgment in this case, whether it might be lawfull for a man to put away his wife upon every occasion, to find out the truth in this case, he sends them to inquire what was the *Institution* and Ordinance of God concerning Marriage at the beginning thereof, *Have ye not read, that he that made them at the beginning, made them Male and Female, and said, man shall leave Father and Mother, &c.* and concludes, *from the beginning it was not so.* Mat 14.4.

Quodcunque primum illud verum, quodcunq; posterius illud falsum Tertul.

So *Paul*, when he was to remove some Errors crept into the Church of *Corinth* about the Sacrament, calls them back to the first Institution of it, *That which I received of the Lord deliver I unto you, that the Lord Jesus the night before he was betrayed took bread, &c.* 1 Cor. 11. 23.

And thus Saint *John* confirmes his Doctrine, *That which was from the beginning, &c.* So that what is grounded upon the *Authority* of the *Prophets* and *Apostles* which wrot by Divine Inspiration, that and only that, hath true *Antiquity* for it. 1 Io. 1. 1.

This is a Doctrine which we may all make much use of in these dayes and times we live in; the Papists who seem again full of hopes to see their Religion flourish, they plead much for the *Antiquity* of their *Religion*, and again, the *Quakers* that pretend so much to the *Spirit*, and can say nothing for the *Antiquity* of their Religion; let us say something to both. *use.*

First, we know that the very name of *Antiquity* is a great Argument with them, whereby they delude many Simple 1. The Papist.

Simple Souls to forsake the Faith and Religion which we profess, and to imbrace Popery.

Our Religion say they, is thus Old, it hath continued this many Hundred years, And as for the Religion of the *Protestants*, it was never known till the dayes of *Luther*, neither of which they are never able to prove.

Neither that our Religion is so late as *Luther*, or theirs is so antient as they pretend.

But we are well able to prove that the Religion we profess, is the same which hath been taught and received *from the beginning*, and therefore is the truth; and that a great number of points, now taught in Popery, are indeed meer *Novelties*, broached by their *Popes* and *Councel* in several ages, and want the Authority of true *Antiquity*.

For besides that wee affirm this, that it is not a thousand, no nor two thousand years, that can make any thing in Religion truly antient, that was not *from the beginning*, and hath not warrant from the Word: So many of the Chief points controverted betwixt us want that pretended Authority of *Antiquity* so much stood upon.

1. The Popes Supremacy. Epit. Chron. lib. 6. Epist 30 *Ego autem fideliter dico quisquis se universalem Sacerdotem vocat, vel vocari desiderat, Antichristum praecurrit.*

For Example,

First, for their Doctrine of the Popes Supremacy over all other *Bishops* and over all Churches, they are not able to prove that it was from the *beginning*, neither the beginning of the World by God the Father, nor the Redemption of the World by Jesus Christ; for in the time of that good Bishop *Gregory* the great, who lived 600. years after Christ, there was no such thing known in the World.

And whereas, *John Bishop* of *Constantinople* sought after that Title, *Gregory* ingenuously confessed, there was never any of his Predecessors Bishops of *Rome* that would take that Prophane Title upon them: and *Boniface* the third was the first that obtained that Title, 607. years after Christ; Is this true *Antiquity*?

2. Secondly for their Doctrine of *Purgatory*, they are not

not able to shew that they have received the same *from the beginning*. *Austin* that lived about 400. years after Christ, plainly sheweth, that in his time it was not received for any Article of Faith, but absolutely denieth it.

Purgatory.

Tertium locum penitus ignoramus.

Thirdly for their *Image-worship*, they are not able to prove this was from the *beginning*, for in the time of the aforesaid *Gregory* there was no such thing used in the Church. *Greg. Epist.* 104. *lib.* 7.

Aug. *de Civit. dei lib.* 22. *Ch.* 26.

3. Image-worship.

Fourthly, for their Doctrine of *Transubstantiation* it was never heard of in the Church, many hundred years after Christ, and never established as a Doctrine of the Christian Faith untill the *Lateran* Councel. 1215. years since Christ; here is as little of true *Antiquity*, as of the truth of that Doctrine.

4. Transubstantiation.

And last of all, their praying to Saints departed, they are never able to prove that this was from the *beginning*, for of all the Prayers Gods servants used in the Scriptures, we find not any such, but have ever Prayed to God alone.

5. Invocation to Saints.

And the like may be said of divers other Ceremonies and observations in Gods Worship in their Church at this day, that have no ground at all from the Word, or true *Antiquity*.

Auricular confession by Innocentius 3 not till 1215 after

use. 2.

But leaving the *Papists* to their pretended *Antiquity*, Let us come to those Monsters of men that trouble the Church in our times, the *Quakers*, that have nothing of *Antiquity* to justifie their wayes, not twenty years can be pleaded since they first sprang up, 'tis true, that some of their absurd opinions have been held by Heretiques in former times, but such a *Hydra* of most damnable Heresies couched together we never found in any, as in these men, and if there could nothing else have been said against them, and the damnable tenents they hold, the very novelty of their Sect, being such as were never heard of in the Church before, but so lately sprung up, this shews that it comes not from God. How did those false Prophets seduce the people, and draw

draw them to Idolatry, but by causing them *to stumble in their way*, from the *Antient wayes*? Are not all the Ordinances of the Gospel Cryed down, and laid aside by these men, as men of a *new light*, and such only that had the *Spirit*? as if Christ had no body, and the Church of Christ no Head till this sprung up in the Church. Such are to know they want one principal mark of the true Church, they cannot plead, *that which was from the beginning*; there is no people of any Religion in the World, that can lay a truer Claim to *Antiquity*, than the Protestant Church of Christ may at this day, and this leads us to the third Use. Jer. 18. 15.

3. For the justifying of our Religion, as being most antient, not taken from *Luther*, we disclaim that title. However God made him a Blessed Instrument in that Age and Generation wherein he lived, of a happy Reformation, yet we are followers of *Luther*, as he was a follower of *Christ*. Let the Papists brag as much as they will of *Antiquity*, and charge our Religion with *Novelty*, yet it is most true as we have in part heard, that the main points of Doctrine held this day in their Church, were not *from the beginning*, not taught by the *Prophets* and *Apostles*, nor known to the Church many hundred years after Christ. And for the Protestant Religion, which we profess, so long as we can derive it from *Adam* in Paradise, and hold forth that *Seed of the Woman*, the Lord Jesus Christ Blessed for ever, *tread in the stepps of the Flock*, and keep close to the Doctrine of the *Prophets*, *Christ*, and his *Apostles*, this is no new Doctrine, or new Religion, but that which was from the *beginning*, most antient and true. Gen. 3. 15 Cant. 1. 8.

That we Love one another.

3. Here we have the third particular at first propounded, and that is the *matter* to the which he perswades her, and that is *Love*. The matter to the which he perswades.

A short word, but a long Lesson, and that which is not

not easily learned, a Lesson and Duty of so great Importance, and necessity, as that there is not any one precept in the Scripture, more often repeated, and beat upon than this of *love one another.*

In the old Testament, it is there laid down as a Commandment, *thou shalt love thy Neighbour as thy self.* Levit. 19. 18.

In the New Testament, how is this Duty of *love* pressed both by Christ and his Apostles? *This is my Commandment, that ye love one another.*

Owe nothing to any man but this, that ye love one another: for he Joh. 15. 12, 17.

That loveth another fulfilleth the Law. Rom. 13. 8

Let Brotherly love continue. Heb. 13. 1.

Love one another, for God is love, &c. 1 Joh. 4. 7.

See that ye love one another with a pure love fervently. 1 Pet. 1. 22.

See 1 Pet. 3. 8. 1 Joh. 3. 11, 23. 1 Joh. 4. 11. 1 Thes. 4. 9. Eph. 5. 2. 2 Pet. 1. 7.

But above all others it is observed of this our Apostle, Saint *John*, that he is no where so great an Orator, and so subtile a Logician as in this Argument of *love.*

And no marvel though the Holy Ghost, so often, and so earnestly urge and press this duty, Because if this one duty be practised aright, it is enough to make men good Christians, and will regulate all our thoughts, words, and works, one towards another. *Locutus est multa, & propè omnia de Charitate.* August.

1. His *thoughts*, for he that truly loveth a man, will not think evill of that man, but judge the best.

2. For his *words* and *Speeches*, he will not speak evil of him, where true *love* is.

3. Much less do him any hurt, either offered, or suffered.

In a word as Saint *Paul* saith, *love is the fulfilling of the Law*, which the Apostle proves by this induction, *Thou shalt not commit Adultery, thou shalt not kill, &c. and if there be any other Commandement it is briefly comprehended in this saying, even in this, Thou shalt love* Rom. 13. 9, 10.

thy

thy Neighbour as thy self. So that *love* is the Compliment of the whole *Law*, that concerns our duties one towards another, so necessary and so excellent a vertue is *love*.

Now for the more cleer opening of this virtue of *love*, I shall observe

These five particulars.
1. What this *Love* is.
2. The *persons* whom we must love.
3. The *manner* how we must love.
4. The *Reasons* why we must love.
5. Wherein this true Love *consisteth*.

1. What true Love is.

First, what this *Love* is: It is defined to be a Grace of God wrought in the hearts of the Faithfull, by the Holy Ghost, when a man doth not only love those alone that are his Neighbours, and dwell neer unto him, but those also that are strangers, not those only that are friends, but even his very enemyes, yea such as he never saw.

Gal. 5. 22. 1 Ioh. 4. 7.

This kind of Love is not a work of nature, but altogether of Gods Spirit, *the fruit of the spirit is love, &c.* And *Every one that loveth is born of God.* Examples in this kind we have in our Blessed Saviour who loved us when we were his Enemyes, and prayed at his Death, *Father forgive them they wot not what they do*, and that Blessed Martyr *Stephen*, who prayed for his Persecutors.

2. The persons whom we must love.

The *love* of a Christian must not be restrained to this man, or that man, but must be extended to all, whomsoever, whatsoever, or wheresoever they be we must hate their sins, but love their persons. Wicked men are to be beloved, not as they are wicked, but as they are men. So that friends and Foes must be beloved, for so hath Christ Commanded, *Love your Enemies, Bless them that Curse you, do good to them that hate you, &c.*

So

So that if any be foes unto us, yet we must be friends unto them. So that none are exempted from our *love*, our friends in God, our foes for God. *Amicos in Deo, Inimicos propter deum.*

But howsoever we are bound to love all, yet not all with the like measure of *love*, but as men are nearer unto us, or farther off from us in degrees of Grace or Nature, so may we love them more or less.

Amongst the Disciples of our Saviour Christ, though he loved them all, yet was there *one* whom he loved above the rest, which was *John*, and was therefore called *the Disciple whom Jesus loved*. And so must our *love* in a special manner be extended to the Saints and such as excel in vertue; and Christ hath promised that *a cup of cold water* given to one of these, *shall not lose its reward*. *The Lord is not unfaithfull to forget the work, and labour of love shewed to the Saints*, and it is an Apostolical Canon, *Do good to all, but especially to the Household of Faith*. Ioh. 13. 34 vers. 23. Heb. 2. 10. Gal. 6. 10.

Thirdly, for the *manner* how we must *love*, for this we have two singular Presidents set before us in the Scripture. 3. The manner how we must love.

We must so one love another
1. As Christ hath loved us.
2. As we Love our selves.

First, as Christ hath loved us, so himself hath charged, *This is my Commandment that ye love one another, as I have loved you*. Ioh. 15. 12

And the Apostle presseth the same duty thus, *Walk in love, as Christ hath loved us*, where the word (As) is not meant in the like *measure*, but in the like *manner* as Christ loved us. Eph. 5. 2.

For we are never able to love, no not our dearest Friends, Wives, Children, Parents or Brethren, in that *measure* that Christ loved us, yet must we in such *manner* love one another as Christ loved us.

Now Christs love to us had in it these three properties.

1. It was Heartily, 2. Freely, 3. Constantly, And thus ought our Love to be towards our Brethren.

1. First, Christs Love towards us was *Heartily*, not like *Judas*'s love to him, *All hail* in the mouth, and *all hate* in the heart: But he shewed his hearty love and affection to us, in this, that he gave his heart to be wounded, and his pretious blood to be shed for us.

2. Secondly, Christ loved us *freely*, not for any gain he looked for by it, but onely because he saw that we stood in need of his love, *I will love thee freely* So, *freely as you have received, freely give.* At the time that we were poor, and in Gods high displeasure, he made us rich, Yea, when we were wounded deadly, and lay bleeding in the blood of our Souls, he was that good *Samaritan* that bound up our wounds; and all this did Christ *freely* for us.

Hos. Mat. 10. 8.

3. Thirdly, Christs love to us was *constant*, *I have loved thee with an everlasting love*, and *he loved his own which were in the World, to the end he loved them*; though he were scourged, and whipped, spit upon, and at last Crucified, yet nothing could alter his Love from us.

Jer. 31. 3. Joh. 13. 1.

Now as the Apostle saith, *Let the same mind be in you which was in Christ Jesus*, That is, love in like manner as Christ loved us, *Heartily*, *Freely*, and *Constantly*, So ought our love to be towards others.

Phil. 2. 5.

2. As we love our selves.

Secondly, *as we love our selves*; so are we often commanded, *Thou shalt love thy Neighbour as thy self*; not as he loves thee, nor as others love him, that must be no Rule to us, but even in such *manner* as thou lovest thy self: So *Jonathan* loved *David even as his own Soul.* No man then need to seek far, for to learn this Lesson, look home to thy own selfe, and see there in thy own body, what love one member bears towards another, how one loves another, not feignedly, coldly, or by fits, and let the same be found in the mystical body, whereof Christ is the head.

Levit. 19. 18. Luke. 10. 27. 1 Sam. 18. 1. 3.

4. The reasons why we must love one another, are many,

many, and very binding to this Duty.

The first Reason is, because the Lord hath so commanded. When the Lawyer would know what was the great Commandment of the Law, Our Saviour returns him this answer, *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, &c. this is the first and great Commandment, and the second is like unto this, Thou shalt love thy Neighbour as thy self*; and our Saviour likewise, *A New Commandment give I unto you, that yee love one another.* And if there were no other Reason to bind us unto the practice of this Duty, this were sufficient. We see what is the power of a King, the authority of a Father, and the place of a Master, But God is all this unto us.

The Reasons why we must love one another.

1. Mat. 22. 37. Joh. 13. 34.

Secondly, because of that Curse and Punishment we shall bring upon our own Souls, by neglecting this Duty; Hereby we shall cause God himself to become our Enemy, and cast us off his love, for, *he that loveth not his Brother, is not of God, but abideth in Death.*

2.

Thirdly, because so long as we are out of *love* and *charity* one with another, there is no service we do to God can be acceptable unto him; *I will have mercy and not Sacrifice*, and *if thou bring thy gift to the Altar, and there remembrest that thy Brother hath ought against thee, leave thine offering before the Altar, and go thy way and be first reconciled to thy Brother.* Yea, all our Hearing, Reading, Prayer, &c. or whatsoever else we do in Gods service will nothing avail us, if we want this *love*; *If I regard wickedness in my heart, the Lord will not hear me*, and in Prayer we are Exhorted, *to lift up pure hands without wrath and doubting.*

3. Mat. 5. 23 &c. Psal. 66. 18. 1 Pet. 2. 1. 1 Tim. 2. 1.

Fourthly, because Gods people are a *peculiar* people unto himself, and so must strive to be *singular*, and to differ from the multitude of the world; *If ye love them that love you, what singular thing do ye? do not Publicans and sinners the same things?* and shall Christians do no more than *Publicans, Turks*, and the very *Heathens*?

4. Mat. 5. 47.

5. Fifthly and lastly, this is such a grace that makes a
Mat. 5. 45. man resemble God our Heavenly Father, *Who causeth*
Psal. 145. *the Sun to shine upon the just and unjust*, and *who is good unto all, and whose mercy is over all his works.* These Reasons wisely weighed and considered, should perswade every Christian to strive against the corruptions of our nature, to put away envy, wrath, uncharitableness, &c. and to love one another.

5. The fifth point and the last is wherein true Love
Wherein true love consisteth. consisteth: or, what are the fruits of true Love.

1. The first and principal Love is to be shewed to the Souls of men, for as the Soul is more excellent than the body, so is that *love* that is shewed to mens precious Souls the chiefest *love.* Thus must we testifie the truth of our love unto men, by exhorting, reproving, and admonishing men, and by all loving waves and means keeping them from sin; *Thou shalt not hate thy*
Levit. 19. 17. *Brother in thy heart, but thou shalt reprove him*, where we see the neglect of this duty towards our brother, the Lord looks upon it as hating our brother; and thus must *Peter* testifie his love to Christ, after his threefold
Ioh. 21. 15 denial of Christ, by feeding *Christs Lambs.* Here is
1 Iohn. 3. 14. true love, *And by this we know that we are translated from death to life, because we love the brethren*, Especially with such a love as extendeth it self to the Souls of our brethren, and (saith St. *James*) Let *him know that*
Iam. 5. 20. *he which converteth a sinner from going astray, shall save a Soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins.*

2. Secondly, it is a sure property of true love to be moved and affected, either with *grief* for any misery, trouble, or affliction that comes upon our brother, or with *joy* for his happiness, and prosperity, *To rejoyce with*
Rom. 12. 15. *them that rejoyce, and to weep with them that weep.* Thus did our Saviour testifie his love to *Lazarus*, in that he
Ioh. 11. 35 Luke 15. 31. wept for him being dead, and it was the sin of the Elder brother to repine at the return, and joyful welcome home of his younger brother by his Father.

3. Thirdly, if thou lovest others in truth, thou shalt

find the affections of thy Soul kindled towards ſuch, eſpecially in whom the Image of God is renewed, for their *Faith*, *Zeal*, *Patience*, and *Godlineſs*, and other ſuch like Graces of the Spirit, and thou wilt accompt theſe the bleſſed companions of thy life, and to theſe thou performeſt the chiefeſt offices of love. So *David*, *My wel-doing extendeth not to thee, but to the Saints that are in the earth, and to the excellent all my delight is in them.* Pſal. 16. 2, 3.

Fourthly, where this true love is, it is extended to all, to one as well as to the other, to the poor as well as the rich, thou wilt *not have the faith of Chriſt in reſpect of perſons.* Howbeit there may be different degrees of love, yet true love will extend it ſelf to all, let their outward eſtate and condition be what it will be; that *love* is not ſound, that is grounded on carnal ends; that is no true *love*, which is not a love eſpecially to their goodneſs, and the graces of God in them; and ſuch cannot truly love goodneſs in one, unleſs they love goodneſs in all; the love of the Spirit is from God, and for God. 4. Iam. 2. 1.

Fifthly, and laſtly, where true love is, it is full of *Charity*, it will help a man in his neceſſity; whom thou loveſt, if thou loveſt him truly, thou canſt not ſee him lack, but upon all occaſions wilt afford him ſuccour. The proverb is, *In love is no lack*, ſo ſaith Saint *John*, *Whoſoever hath this worlds goods, and ſeeth his Brother in need, and ſhutteth up his compaſſion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?* where *love* is in the heart, it will be in the hand. Yea love will adventure far to help ſuch that are beloved. *Obadiah* will help the Lords Prophets to the hazard of his life, and ſo will Queen *Heſter*, the Lords people. Now let us apply this. 5. 1 Ioh. 3. 17.

Firſt, from this Doctrine of Chriſtian *love*, wherein we have ſeen *what* this love is, the *perſons* to be beloved, the *manner* how, the *reaſons* why, and *wherein* this love conſiſteth; This ſerves to ſhew the miſerable condition of thoſe that are ſo far from practiſing *uſe.* 1.

this duty, that on the contrary they live in envy, wrath, malice, and all uncharitableneſs; if love be an ear-mark of Chriſts ſheep, then theſe belong not to Chriſts fold; and if we may judge of the Tree by the fruit, it will appear, There is a general want of love in the world; moſt mens love is in word only; meerly Gloſing and Complemental, little fruit, therefore little love: but this is none other thing than that which our Saviour foretold, that in the latter dayes *iniquity ſhould abound,*
Mat. 24. *and the love of many ſhould wax cold*; and that which is ſad to behold, and to take notice of, in a people profeſſing ſo much Sanctity, as if they had attained to a perfect and ſinleſs condition, (which eſtate never any attained unto in this life, Chriſt excepted) yet who ſees not, that even in theſe the ſpirit of *envy* and *malice* reigneth, and that againſt the moſt faithfull ſervants of God in the Land? Theſe are the ſpecial objects of their *Envy*, and *Malice*, which they ſtick not to vent forth in the publick meetings of Gods ſervants, as if they had received ſuch a commiſſion from the Devil, which the King of *Aſſiria* gave forth to his Captains, *fight neither againſt ſmall nor great*, ſave onely with thoſe they call Miniſters. Where are the fruits of that
Gal. 5. 22. ſpirit they claim to, which are *Love, Peace, Gentleneſs, Goodneſs, Meekneſs, Temperance, &c?* Surely of all people they are contrary hereto in their practice and wayes.

2. Secondly, as the Apoſtle exhorteth this *Lady* and her *Children*, ſo we exhort all, not as Preaching a new Commandment unto you, *But that which was from the beginning, That ye love one another.* Love is the fulfilling of the Law; the great Commandment is, *Thou ſhalt*
Mat. 22. 37. *love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, &c.* and the ſecond is like unto this, *Thou ſhalt love thy Neighbour as thy ſelf.*

Gal. 5. 22. Where Love is, there the Spirit is, *The fruit of the Spirit is Love*, and where the Spirit is, there Chriſt is, for his habitation is in the Soul by the *Spirit*, and

Chriſt

Christ dwels in the heart by Faith, and where true *Faith* is, *it worketh by Love*; so that there is an holy concatenation, and linking together of these, *God* and *Christ*, the *Spirit*, *Faith*, and *Love*, so that they that have true Evidence in themselves of this grace of *Love* may take exceeding comfort to themselves in the assurance of Gods special *Love* to them, and that they want not any Grace. Eph. 3. 17.

Vers. 6.

And this is the Love, that we should walk after his Commandements, This Commandment is, that as ye have heard from the beginning, ye should walk in it.

THis verse contains in it the third general part of the *substance* or principal *matter* in this *Epistle*, and that is an *Explication* of the former verse, what it is the Apostle meaneth by *Love*, and this he doth by shewing the fruit and effect thereof, what it is, viz. Whosoever loveth indeed and in truth, that man walketh and ordereth his life according to the *Commandment*. This is cleer by that of our Saviour himself, *He that hath my Commandments and keepeth the same, he it is that loveth me*, and again, *abide in my Love, If ye shall keep my Commandements, ye shall abide in my Love*. 3. Part of the Substance of the Epist. Ioh. 14. 21 Ioh. 15. 10

The scope then and drift of our Apostle in this verse is, to shew, that we cannot better testifie our *Love* to God, than by *keeping his Commandment*.

But what is it, that he especially requireth, and expects at our hands? *Quest.* What is it that God requireth.

Certainly, the great commandment is *Love*, yea, that which was *from the beginning*; the Lord hath injoyned above all other things, that we should *Love one another*, so saith the Apostle, *This commandment have we of him, that he that loveth God, should love his Neighbour also*. *Answ.* 1 Ioh. 4. 21. Rom. 13. 8 Gal. 5. 14

This is said to be the *fulfilling of the Law*; from whence the Doctrine is cleer.

Doct. That whereſoever there is true *Love* in the heart of a man, there is obedience to the whole Law of God. So ſaith our Apoſtle here, *This is that Love that we ſhould walk after his commandments*; ſo that where there is true love, there is obedience to all the Commandments.

True love keepeth the Commandments.

Run over all the Commandments of the firſt Table, and we ſhall ſee that Love is the fulfilling of them all.

1. He that loves God aright will not make any thing elſe his God, by truſting in it, praying unto it, or loving it more than God.

2. He will not Religiouſly bow down to worſhip any thing but him.

3. He will not take his *name in vain*, nor ſuffer others to do it unreproved.

4. He will not prophane his *Sabbath*; but ſanctifie the ſame as holy unto the Lord, and ſee that all that are *within his gates* do the ſame.

Secondly, where there is *Love*, there will be obedience likewiſe to all the Commandments of the ſecond Table: for,

1. He that loves his *Parents* will not any wayes diſhonour them.

And for the reſt, he that loves his neighbour, will not any wiſe hurt him in his body, goods, or good-name, by adultery, theft, or falſe witneſs-bearing, &c. And hence is it that Saint *Paul* ſaith, that *Love is the fulfilling of the Law*.

And this is farther cleered by the Apoſtle, by making a particular Enumeration of the fruits, and effects of love, and ſheweth therein in what particulars there is obedience to the Commandments in *Love*, ſaying,

1 Cor. 13. 4. *Love ſuffereth long, is bountifull, love envieth not, love doth not frowardly, ſwelleth not, dealeth not diſhoneſtly, ſeeketh not her own, is not provoked to anger, thinketh no evill, Rejoyceth not in iniquity, but in the truth, ſuffereth*

all

all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, indureth all things. These be the blessed fruits, and effects of Love.

Finally so excellent and singular a vertue is *Love*, that whereas those three *Theological* vertues, *Faith*, *Hope*, and *Love*, are the Trinity on Earth, that shall one day bring us to the fruition of the Trinity in Heaven, the chiefest of these is *Love*, for so saith the Apostle, *Now abideth Faith, Hope, and Love, but the chiefest of these is Love.* 1 Cor. 13. 13.

But this may seem strange, that *Love* should be greater than *Faith*, *Object.*

This is not spoke absolutely, for in some respects *Faith* is greater than *Love*, and in some respects *Love* is greater than *Faith*. *Answer.*

In respect of my own particular, My *Faith* is more needfull than my *Love*, for it is my *Faith* that unites me to Christ, interesseth me into all his benefits, and without which I cannot please God, neither is any duty I do accepted of him. 1. Heb. 11. 6.

But in respect of others amongst whom I live, my *Love* is of greater use, and more needfull than my *Faith*.

Secondly, my *Faith* is restrained within the bounds of my own person, but my *love* stretcheth forth her branches, and extendeth it self to God, to Angels, and to men. It reacheth upward to those that are my *Superiors*, it stoopeth downward to those that be my *Inferiors*; on my right hand, to those that are friends, on my left hand, to those that are enemies. 2.

Thirdly, in respect of the continuance of *Faith* and *Love*, *Love* is greater. *Faith* apprehends Gods gratious promise concerning eternal Salvation. *Hope* expects with patience when God will fulfill his Word, and we enjoy the thing promised, and then shall *Faith* and *Hope* have an end, and *Love* abideth. 3.

Now

Now this obedience to the Commandments which is a fruit of *Love*,

Will shew it self
1. By active obedience to Gods Commandements.
2. By passive obedience for Gods Commandments.

First, we walk after his Commandments by doing those things which God commands, and eschewing those things which he forbids. Herein is our *Love* manifested to God, as Christ saith, *If ye love me keep my Commandments*. Thus *Zachary* and *Elizabeth walked in all the Commandements of God*, and *David*, *I shall not be confounded while I have respect unto all thy commandments*. This is it that *Solomon* gives in special charge unto the people at the dedication of the Temple, *Let your heart be perfect with the Lord your God*. But it will be said, how can this be? It is answered, *to walk in his statutes, and to keep his Commandements*; and thus did *Hezechiah* approve his *love* to God, *I remember Lord I beseech thee how I have walked before thee*, &c. not that the obedience of the best of Gods servants is *perfect* and intire here, this cannot be, for *who can say, I have made my heart clean, I am pure from my sin*? none can say so: for so long as these bodies of ours have life in them, so long will our sins have life in them; but sin reigns not in their mortal bodyes, they are humbled for their failings, and pant after that time, when they shall perfectly love God and obey his will.

Luk. 1. 6.
Psal. 119.
1 Reg. 8. 61.
Esay. 38. 3
Prov. 20. 9.

Secondly, as we are *actually* to yield obedience to the Commandements of God, So must our obedience be *passive* for it, as active to it. This was the commendation of the Church of *Sardis*, *Thou hast kept the word of my patience*. The meaning is, thou hast kept close to my truth, that must have patience to the keeping of it. There may be some one Commandment, which if a man at some time keep close unto and practise, he may surely

Rev. 3. 10

surely suffer for, and must look for perfecution to hold forth, In Qu. *Maries* dayes, some things were then pressed to men that were not so dangerous: But if a man stood fast against that Doctrine of the *Real-presence* in the Sacrament, this brought him in danger. To profess Religion in time of peace and prosperity, when a man hath wind and tide with him, is no great matter, but when a man shall keep close to God, and the truth in harder times, times of tryal and persecution, then is our *love* to God and his truth seen; that of *David* is remarkable, *Princes have persecuted me without a cause, but my heart standeth in awe of thy Word.* Psal. 119. 161. q. d. though they be Princes that threaten and persecute me, yet I fear thy word more than them; this is to keep the commandment by *passive* obedience.

The grounds of this Doctrine are.

First, the Soveraignty of God, who only hath power to prescribe unto man his duty. Now his Commandment is, that we should *love one another.* God being our great Lord and Master, if we would approve our selves to be his servants, we must do his Commandments, neither will God accept of any thing that we do when it hath not the stamp of his command upon it. Of what esteem were all that glistering shew and devotion of the *Pharisies* when they had no command from God for it? *Reas.* 1.

Secondly, if it be the Commandment of God, then it is love only that bears up our hearts against all discouragements we meet withall in doing our duties; This bare up the heads of the *Prophets* and *Apostles*, and caused them to rejoyce in their sufferings, that they knew it was for Christ, and what they did was in obedience to his *Command.* Shall *Absalom* cheer up the heart of him that had killed *Ammon*, saying, *Be of good cheer I have bid thee do it*, and should a servant of God faint in doing that which he hath a *Command* from God? 2. Act. 5. 29.

Thirdly, if we consider but the sufficiency of the Scriptures 3.

Scriptures which is left to us as a Rule, a perfect Rule for us to walk by, that *same word to the which we do well if we do take heed*, as *Peter* hath it, *And as many as walk according to this Rule, peace shall be upon them and mercy, &c.* This *David* commends *as a lanthorn, and a*
Psal. 119. *light to our feet*, and such as lay aside this Rule, it is because there is no wisdome in them. Whence comes at this day those quarrels and oppositions in matters of Religion, but by laying aside this rule? so that it is necessary that we have Gods word, his commandment, for the rule of our obedience, else we shall fall into *Enthusiastical* revelations, Popish traditions, or Quakers dreams, no good plea with God; so that the point is cleer and plain, that that only is proper obedience, that hath the *Word* and *Command* of God requiring it. Let us apply this.

Use 1. If obedience to Gods *Commandments* is a testification of our *love* to God, what shall we say to those that are so far from approving themselves thus to *love God* by being obedient to Gods command, that their daily and constant practice is to live in open and professed disobedience thereunto? if the most pious devotions, and religious intentions of men professing *love* to God are rejected of God for want of a *command* from him, what shall we think of those whose Doctrines and Tenents, and whose way of worship is a plain opposition to it? as the wayes af the *Quakers* are at this day, laying aside all *Evangelical Commands*, as Preaching; Praying, Baptism, singing of Psalms, the Supper of the Lord, &c. against Gods *command*, and set up a way of worship according to their own fantasies and misguided hearts, which God hath not commanded; Saying, they love God, and do not the things that he *commandeth*.

2. Secondly, we have here a Touchstone by the which we may try our selves, whether we truly *love* God yea or no. Every man will be ready to profess his *love* to God, and who would be looked upon as one not to

love

love God? would you not be deceived in this case? Examine diligently your own hearts, whether you keep Gods *commands*, *This is the love* (saith St. *John*) *that we should walk after his commandments.* These are they that Christ lays claim unto, *Thou gavest them me, and they have kept thy word.* Ioh. 17. 6. There cannot be a surer sign of our love to God, than obedience to his word. It was the good ground only, *that heard the word and kept it.* There is no man can have true comfort and assurance that he doth truly love God, unless he yield obedience to the *Commandments* of God.

And to the end we deceive not our selves in this so weighty a point, that so highly concerns us; our obedience to the Word must have three special properties in it. 3 Special properties of true obedience:

First, It must be *Entire*; Not only to keep some part and parcels of Gods *Commands*, and to neglect the rest, which a carnal wretch may do, when to obey in something will suit with mens carnal interests and ends: But even that part of the word and commands of God which seems most of all to cross our wills and humours, and interest, that we must conform unto. *I shall not be confounded* (saith David) *whilst I have respect unto all thy commandments.* Here is no reservation, *David* will not allow himself in any disobedience to the least Iota of Gods Law. And again, *Through thy precepts I get understanding, therefore every false way I utterly abhor. q. d.* Assoon as I come to understand from thy word, and from thy law, that way that is false and repugnant to thy word and will, I utterly abhor it. Herein did *David* approve his love to God. True love will bring a man up fully to obedience to the whole *Word* and *commands* of God. So that this man doth not advisedly and customarily commit that sin that the word condemns, or neglect that duty which the word commands. 1. Psal. 119. v. 104.

2. As the word and *commands* of God are to be kept *entirely*, so are they to be kept *cordially* and *heartily*; 2.

tily; that we must be able to say, *The love of God constraineth us to obedience.* This obedience doth the Apostle testifie to have been in the *Romans*, *Ye have obeyed from the heart the form of Doctrine that hath been delivered unto you.* They had that within them to quicken them, and stir them up to obey God, that principle of love to God, carried them on to obey God. *Iehu* did very much for the matter of his obedience, as God himself gives testimony, *Thou hast executed that which was right in mine eyes.* His failing was in this, *that he did it not with an upright heart*: And therefore the Lord threatens to lay to the charge of *Iehu* and his house, all the blood that was shed of the house of *Ahab*.

Rom. 6. 17.

2 Reg. 10. 13.

Try by this, you say you love God, doth this love of yours as an inward principle from within, keep you from sin that God hath forbidden, and put you upon duty that God hath *commanded*? you cannot, you will not do the one, you cannot, you will not omit the other; there is an Antipathy in your spirit to the one, there is a complacency in your spirit to the other; this is a sign of your *love* to God.

3. Thirdly, As the Word and Commands of God are to be kept and obeyed *entirely* and *cordially*, so are they to be kept *constantly*; perseverance crowns our love to God, and every duty we perform. *Be thou faithful unto the Death, and I will give thee that crown of Life.* And, *Be not weary of well-doing, for in due time ye shall reap, if ye faint not.* And, *He that endures to the end, the same shall be saved.* To begin in the Spirit, and to end in the Flesh, will lose us all. The Lord knows, that in these shaking, and tottering times wherein we live, many such we have amongst us, who seemed to put out fairly, as if they had tasted of the tree of Life, who for a time were diligent hearers of the Word, frequented our Christian assemblies, were instruments to draw on others in the wayes of godli-

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Gal. Mat. 24.

ness,

ness, and were instant in the study of the Scriptures, seemed to be cautious and watchful to their wayes, in walking according to the rule of the word and *commands* of God; But alas! who sees not now with many, this word and *command* of God is laid aside, as no sufficient Rule for them to walk by? the Scripture Rule must not be a Rule for these men; they have found out a better, and a surer Rule to walk by; they have the *light within*, and an *un-erring spirit within* them, that they walk by: yea, to that height of impiety and blasphemy are some of them come unto, that they parallel their own frothy writings, to be as infallible truth as the Scriptures themselves, being written, as they say, by the same Spirit the Apostles had; and that to burn them, were as well to burn the Bible it self. O what a thing is man, when God is provoked to leave him to himself, what sin so horrid, that he may not fall into!

Verse 7.

For many Deceivers are entred into the world, which confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, he that is such a one, is a Deceiver and an Antichrist.

FRom this 7th verse to the end of the 11th. we have the fourth general part of the Body or *substance* of this Epistle, *viz.* An *Exhortation* to *Constancy* in the Faith and Religion which this *Lady* and her *Children* had imbraced, and publickly professed. 4. The Exhortation.

And the ground of this Exhortation was, for that many *Deceivers* and false Teachers were now gone abroad into the world, and seduced many, and drew them away from the Faith of Christ: Whereupon our Apostle exhorteth this *Lady* and her *Children*, to beware of such, and in any wise to abide constant in the Faith of the Gospel.

But what was it that these *Deceivers* would make the

the world believe? *viz.* a point that strikes at the very Root, and such as if they can perswade men to believe, doth quite overthrow the Gospel, and Christian Religion; and that is, That Christ, the Messiah that was promised of old to the *Patriarchs* and *Prophets*, is not yet come in the flesh.

The Apostles *Exhortation* consisteth of two branches.

1. To beware of the Doctrine of these *Seducers*, that they give no ear unto them, to hear them, *v.* 7, 8, 9.
2. To beware of their persons, that they acquaint not themselves with such as they are, nor have any familiarity with them, *v.* 10.

And the scope and intent of the whole speech is to this effect, *q. d.* If it be so that many *Deceivers* be entred into the world, and such as broach about this Damnable Doctrine, That Christ the *Messiah* is not come in the flesh, as it was propheſied of old; then it stands you in hand to look well to your selves that you be not deceived by such: But it is most certain that such *Deceivers* are now abroad in the world, listen ye not unto them, but remain constant in the Faith and Religion of Christ to the end.

The first branch of the Apostles Exhortation is to beware of their Doctrine, *v.* 7, 8, 9. *Many Deceivers are entred, &c.* Wherein we are to observe four particulars.

1. A *Proposition*; *Many Deceivers are entred into the world.*
2. A *Description* of these Deceivers two ways.
   1. By their Doctrine; *They confess not that Jesus Christ is come into the world.*
   2. By their Quality; *Such a one is a Deceiver, &c.*
3. An Exhortation to beware of these, *v.* 8. *Look to your selves*, &c.
4. The

4. The Reasons wherewith he inforceth his Exhortation, which are these.

1. v. 8. Is taken from the great loss that will ensue if we hearken unto such, *we shall lose the things that we have done.* Which may be taken two wayes.

1. Either of this *Lady* and her *Children.* That they shall lose the fruit and benefit of their good beginning, and all the good heretofore done by them. Or,

2. It may be understood of those Ministers who hitherto had bestowed much labour in preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ unto this *Lady* and her *Children*, whose labours now should be lost if they should fall away.

2. Reason is taken from the great *Reward* that in the end should be given to them, if they continue and abide constant in the Faith to the end. *We shall receive a full reward*, v. 8.

3. Reason is taken from the great danger they shall bring themselves into, if they do not abide constant in the Faith of Jesus Christ. v. 9. They shall hereby lose the favour of God, and of Christ; for so saith the Apostle, *Whosoever transgresseth and abideth not in the Doctrine of Christ, hath not God: He that continueth in the Doctrine of Christ, hath the Father and the Son.*

Before we come to these particulars there are two general Observations to be noted.

1. That the Devil most rageth, where the Gospel most prospereth.

2. That it is the duty of every faithful Minister of Christ, to be very careful to preserve their people from *Seducers* and errours.

Doct. The Devil most rageth, where the Gospel is most preach-

First, that the Devil most rageth where the Gospel is most preached. This is most clear and plain in this Epistle. Now that the Apostles and Ministers of Christ had published the Gospel, which wrought effectually with many to bring them to Christ; Now doth Sa-

than he in himself, and sets his instruments on work, such as are false Apostles, *Deceivers*, and teachers of errors; and all to overthrow the truth of the Gospel, and to lead men into damnable errors. This was apparent in the Apostles dayes, even in the purest age of the Church; and in all times since, the truth of the Gospel hath ever found some to withstand it.

Thus it was in the dayes of Christ, when he came and preached the Word of the Kingdome, and confirmed his Doctrine with signs and wonders from Heaven, insomuch that many believed on him; How did the Devil set on himself at that time, by his Instruments the *Scribes* and *Pharisees*, by all means to hinder him, and used all means possible to intangle Christ, and to insnare him? Insomuch that they were vexed at their hearts, when they could not prevail. *Perceive ye not, that we prevail nothing at all.* And this was it in the time of the *Apostles* that were sent out to preach the Gospel, what opposition and persecution met they withall? How were the *Rulers* offended at *Peters* Sermon, laying violent hands upon them? *Annas* and *Caiphas* held a consultation, forbidding them straightly, not any more to preach in the name of Jesus; put them into prison, stoned *Stephen*. So when *Paul* preached in the *Synagogues*, so that many believed, the Text saith, that the Jews stirred up the Gentiles, and made their minds ill affected towards the brethren, that *Paul* and *Silas* are whipped and imprisoned. Thus *Paul* preaching at *Ephesus* and crying down their great Idol *Diana*, how doth *Demetrius* lay about him to hinder the work of God? And besides all these troubles and persecutions the servants of Christ have met withall in preaching of the Gospel; Satan hath stirred in the Church false Teachers, who by their false Doctrine have ever laboured to pervert the truth; as in the Church of *Galatia*, that *Paul* cryes out, *O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you?* And this is none other thing than what was foretold, that

Joh. 12. 19.

Act. 3. 16.

Act. 14.

Act. 19.

Gal. 3. 1.

in

in the last times there should be such, like *Jannes* and *Jambres* that resisted *Moses*, *so they should resist the truth*; *Men of corrupt minds*: and as before, he is no less busie at this day; His rage is great, because his time is short. 2 Tim. 3. 8.

Is taken from the malice of Sathan against God and goodness. He hates God, because he cast him out of Heaven, down to Hell. He hates Christ, because he brake his head. He hates the Gospel, because that overthrows his Kingdom. He hates his Ministers, because they war against his Kingdom: And no where doth Sathan rage more, than where the Gospel is most sincerely, and most powerfully preached; for there is his Kingdom most weakened and battered down; *When one heareth the Word of the Kingdom, then cometh that wicked one.* *Reas.* 1. Gen. 3. 15. Mat. 13.

Secondly, Such is Sathans policy, that he cannot but know, that when the Gospel is preached, his time is but short, and he cannot work long, and therefore he will work while he may. Christ bids us work while it is day, and the Devil is so wise as to take his time. 2.

Thirdly, the Lord is pleased to permit Sathan and his Instruments to go out, and exercise their malice against the truth; that the power of the word may appear the greater, and his own power and wisdom may be seen in countermining Sathans working: and when Sathan and his cursed Instruments have seemed most of all to prevail, then hath God appeared, and sent some seasonable deliverance. 3.

And surely this Doctrine is of much Use for these dayes and times wherein we live, wherein the Gospel is so plentifully preached and taught, as no age of our Church since the Reformation of Religion amongst us, might parallel; God having poured out of his Spirit upon many young men, that are excellently gifted for the work of the Ministry, above many ancient and more learned men in former times; many *Use.* 1.

young *Samuels*, and many young *Timothies* hath God raised up in the Church, to batter down the kingdom of Darkness. But withall we see, that never did Sathan rage more than at this day, by himself, and by his Instruments, broaching of Errors and Heresies in all Countryes and places, by Anabaptists, Quakers, Ranters, &c. Certainly Sathan hath his throne amongst us, and was never so busie at work as at this day; Ministers never more despised than at this day, opposed even in the publick assemblies, by Sectaries, sons of *Belial*; yea Religion disgraced and discountenanced, the Sabbath openly prophaned, and much impiety and licentiousness practised every where: and why should we wonder at all this? It is a sign the word doth work, where the Devil and his Instruments are so busie to oppose it. Will a Prince be quiet, when his Kingdom is undermined? and will Sathan be quiet whilst his Kingdom is pulling down? This cannot be.

2. Secondly, this serves to take away that unjust scandal that is cast upon the Gospel, and the Ministers of it: that where the Gospel comes, and where there is so much preaching, it breeds strife, division and dissention; yea Ministers are said to cause all this. Was not this *Jeremies* case? *Wo is me, my mother hath born me a contentious man.* And *Michaiah* is counted a troubler of Israel. But it is not the word, but the Devil and his cursed Instruments that makes division and contention. *It is thou and thy fathers house*, saith *Michaiah* to *Ahab*. And the more plentifully the Gospel is preached, whilst there is a Devil, there will be opposition to it. *I came not to send peace* (saith Christ) *but the sword.*

Jer. 15. 10.

And this consideration should arm us against the spreading errors of these times, by Papists, Anabaptists, Quakers, &c. these are but the tares which the envious man soweth in the Lords field, amongst the good wheat. Consider that place of *Paul*, *There must*

be

be Hereſies even amongſt you, that they that are approved may be known. We come to the ſecond. 1 Cor. 11. 19.

That it is the Duty of every faithful Miniſter, to reſiſt the reſiſters of the truth. This is clear by the practice of our Apoſtle here, who having preached the Goſpel, and planted a Church, is vigilant to watch over it, and as a faithful watchman and Miniſter of Chriſt, warn them of the enemy, and ſuch as went about to ſeduce them, and draw them away from the Faith. When falſe teachers ariſe, and ſpring up in the Church, there muſt be no bearing or forbearing on the Miniſters part; the truth muſt and will be the conquerour: and who muſt ſtand up to defend it more than the Miniſters? whoſe calling is to defend the truth even before the greateſt ones of the world, Kings, Princes, *Pharaoh*, *Ahab*, *Herod*, *&c.* yea though it coſt them their liberties and lives. *Doct.* 2. Miniſters muſt reſiſt the reſiſters of the truth.

Let the adverſaries of the truth, Anabaptiſts, Quakers, &c. fret and fume, call us *Perſecutors*, *Wolves* and *Devils*, as ſome have done; muſt theſe things tye our tongues? and men that be ſeducers, and gainſayers of the truth, riſe up againſt Chriſt, and cry down Ordinances; and muſt Miniſters be ſilent all this while, and not reſiſt them? Shall theſe men be at war with Chriſt, and at peace with us? Where is that zeal for God, and compaſſion towards poor deluded ſouls, that ought to be in every faithful Miniſter? And hence it is that the Apoſtles in their Epiſtles to the Churches, ſo frequently warn them to take heed of ſuch, *Falſe Prophets, and falſe teachers, that ſhould bring in damnable errors. Brute beaſts* (as the Apoſtle calls them) *led with ſenſuality*: Men like *Jannes* and *Jambres*, that reſiſt the truth: *being reprobate concerning the faith.* Thus *Elimas* reſiſted *Paul* and *Barnabas*, and ſought to turn away *Sergius Paulus* the Deputy from the Faith, of whom it is ſaid, that *he was full of unrighteouſneſs, and could not ceaſe to pervert the ſtraight ways of God.* And hence is it that the Miniſters of 2 Pet. 2. 10. Acts 13. 8, 10.

Christ have so many watch-words given them in the Word, even by Christ himself; *Beware of false Prophets, which come unto you in sheeps cloathing, but inwardly they are ravening Wolves.* And *Paul* gives this in charge to the Elders of the Church of *Ephesus*, *Take heed to your selves, and to the flock over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers. Many false prophets shall arise* (saith our Saviour) *and shall deceive, if it be possible, the very Elect.* And *Paul* is very frequent in all his Epistles, often pressing this, with these and the like words, *Be not deceived*; and *Let no man beguile you*: So that the point is clear and plain, that it is the Duty of every faithful Minister of Christ, not only to teach, and deliver sound and wholsom Doctrine to the people, but to watch over their flock, that they be not seduced, and drawn away into error.

Mat. 7.

Act. 20. 28.

Reas. 1. The very Calling it self of the Ministry, minds them of this Duty. What good *Shepheard* will not be very shie of Wolves, if he tender his flock? If a flock of sheep of 4 *l.* a score be so carefully kept by a good shepheard? How much more should the flock of Christ, purchased at so dear a rate as his own blood? Shall *Iacob* shew such care over the flock of *Laban*, an hard Master? And shall Ministers shew so little care to the flock of Christ, a merciful Redeemer?

2. Secondly, Seasonable admonition and warning, many times prevents much danger; the very barking of a dog awakens the family, and frayeth away the thief: and many an unstable soul hath waxed strong by the godly advice and counsel of others.

3. Thirdly, the danger for the neglect hereof, may provoke Ministers to their duty herein; Such seduced souls may perish, but their blood will God one day require at their hands.

Eze. 3.

Use 1. This may serve to teach all the *Ministers* of the Gospel both wisdom and watchfulness, as we would approve our selves faithful *Shepheards* of Christs flock. Saint *Pauls* example may be our Instruction, and Saint

Iohn

John likewise in this Epistle, may serve to warn us all to be very watchfull over the envious man, that he sow not Tares amongst the good Wheat that we have sown. Never never did Gods servants in the Ministry stand more in need of this circumspection and care than in these dayes and times wherein we live. As *David* when he kept his fathers sheep, encountred with a *Lyon* and *Bear*, and it was *Pauls* case to *fight with beasts at Ephesus*, *after the manner of men*; So have we now *Lyons* and *Bears*, and to boot *Wolves* and *Foxes* to incounter withall. Never did those Emissaries of *Rome* play their game more cunningly than at this day, heading the Quakers (the greatest Enemies that the Church of God hath this day in this Land) in their publick meetings, And under the pretext of crying down of Popery, are the greatest Instruments to set it up. Who cannot but morn to see so many *edificare ad Gehennam* as one well observes, labour to bring men to Hell and Destruction? and is it not high time, and more than time for Ministers to open their mouths wide to oppose them, and to keep the Doctrine of Christ pure and uncorrupt?

Secondly, this serves likewise to condemn the horrible neglect of this duty in many Ministers at this day, 2. that having taken upon them the charge of Souls, want will, and skill to govern the flock committed unto them, and which depend upon them; these may be accounted honest men, and good fellows, but faithfull Ministers of Christ they shall never be able to prove themselves to be, whilst their *flock* is no better regarded; for a Minister to preach the Word diligently, and never to regard *Discipline* and Government, and the oversight of his people, is but half a Minister, and little fruit comes of such mens labours.

And lastly, a word to our people, this highly con- 3. cerns you; for if this be the duty of your Pastors and Teachers, not only to teach sound Doctrine, but to be thus *watchfull* over you, that you be not seduced and drawn away from the truth,

Then this concerns you, that you look well to your selves that you be not drawn aside with every blast of vain Doctrine, that you listen not the voyce of the *charmer* charm he never so wisely.

Quest. But what would you have us to do in these evil times, wherein we are thus beset round about? fain we would imbrace the truth; and loath we are to be seduced into error.

Answ. That we may be preserved from turning away from the truth, These Rules must be observed.

1. Rules to be observed to establish in the truth.

1. First, take heed of entertaining Religion or the profession of the Gospel upon any termes lower than the *love* of Religion and of the Gospel; neither for the laws of the land, or because it is generally received and taken up and professed, as many do, this foundation of our faith and religion is not laid deep enough, this is but a sandy foundation. But we must receive the truth for the love of the truth; for that we intirely love we will not easily part withall: whereas if we take up our Religion because of credit, riches, honor, liberty, &c. when these things fail, we may easily fall from the Truth, and lose our Religion and Salvation and all.

2. Secondly, take heed of Pride, spiritual Pride of gifts, and parts, this hath been the undoing of many in our dayes, especially young men, that have put forth fairly at first, and having got some brain knowledge that they have been able to discourse well of Religion, have grown so proud of gifts and parts, that Sathan hath taken that advantage thereby to draw them to strange opinions, to believe lyes, and fall from the truth. 2 Thes. 2.

For the preventing of this danger, care must be had that we call no Divine truth into Question, or dare to dispute against it, this is a dangerous thing; suspect not that we cannot reach unto, it is the safer to question our own weakness and ignorance, than to call any truth of God into question.

3. The third Rule to be observed to preserve us from falling

falling is to take heed of indifferency and luke-warmness in Gods matters, these God threatneth to spue out of his mouth, and of all others these lye wide open to be *seduced*, being never rooted, grounded, nor established in the truth.

Fourthly, Prayer is an excellent means to keep us in the truth, and therefore we should often Pray *that we be not led into temptation.* It was Christ Prayer that kept *Peter*, whom Sathan desired to winnow, that he fell not away; none are more like to stand than those that make the Lord their strength and stay. And thus much for the general observations. 4.

Now to the part of the Text.

And first for the proposition, *Many deceivers are entred into the World.* The same that St. *John* speaketh of here, our Saviour himself foretold should come after his Departure, *There shall arise false Prophets and false Teachers*, such as should work so effectually, *that if it were possible they should deceive the very elect.* 1 The proposition. Mat. 24. 24.

Now that we may the better discern these dangerous *Deceivers*, we shall observe

1. What is here meant by a *Deceiver.*
2. Their shews and pretences whereby they deceive the World, what they are.
3. Who they be in the World that are most easily deceived by them.
4. The causes and reasons why God suffereth deceivers in the World.

First, who is here meant by a *Deceiver.* A *Deceiver* in this place is none other than the same who elsewhere is called *a false Prophet*, and *a false Teacher.* Now in such a Deceiver two things are required. 1. Who is a Deceiver.

1. He must be such a one as maintaineth some gross error against the Grounds and Principles of Christian Religion; for every erroneous opinion that a man holds will not make him a *Deceiver*; but such as strike at the fundamentals of Christian Religion.

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This is clear by that of the Apostle *Peter*, where he saith, *There shall be false Teachers amongst you which privily shall bring in damnable Heresies*, meaning indeed that they shall hold damnable opinions, such as shall overthrow the very foundation and grounds of faith and religion.

1 Pet. 2.1.

2. Besides, the holding of such a damnable error in his own heart, He that is a *Deceiver* must be such a one as labours to Seduce others, they must be such Seducers as our Saviour speaks of, *There shall come false Christs, and false Prophets, and shall deceive many*, implying thereby, that they shall have this property in them, that they shall not only be content to be deceived themselves alone, but shall labour to seduce and deceive others.

Mat. 24. 24.

As for such as hold any erronious opinions privately to themselves, and in their own hearts, so far as they are not against the ground and foundation of the Christian Faith, neither seek to Seduce others, They may be Hypocrites or Schismaticks, or bad Christians; but false *Teachers* and *Deceivers*, they cannot properly be said to be.

If you would have some examples and Instances of such as are properly to be styled *Deceivers*, You may look upon the *Iesuits* and *Roman Priests*, and their offspring amongst us (though many amongst them know it not) I mean the *Quakers*, who Travel Sea and Land, and publish false Doctrine, and labour so instantly by all means possible to deceive and seduce others. These have no wrong to be styled *Deceivers*.

And these kind of *Deceivers* where they are, and are suffered to range about (as too many are in these days) subvert whole Houses, and indanger whole Parishes, as wofull experience makes it apparent. Well therefore may the infection of error be compared to a *Gangrene* which spreadeth farther and farther, and there is no way to cure the person but by cutting off the member. And therefore well may our Saviour call the

1 Tim. 2. 7.

Doctrine

Doctrine of the *Scribes* and *Pharisees* leaven, which we know well to be of a spreading nature. Who would ever have thought that such blasphemous and abominable tenents held out by the Quakers should ever have spread so far at this day, to the undoing of thousand Souls? but that we may see what is the cursed nature of *Error* and *Heresie*, which *Gangrene* like is of a spreading nature. Let us apply this. Mat. 16. 12.

Use 1. This may serve for humble advice to all that are in Authority under God, both Superiour and Inferiour Magistrates, that they stand for God and appear for God, at such a time especially as this is, wherein swarms of *Deceivers* are at work, sowing Tares daily in the Lords Field. The *Iesuits* and *Roman Priests* now bestir themselves, their meetings are more frequent and open than heretofore. *Anabaptists* and *Quakers* have their meetings, where many hundreds assemble themselves without check, or controlement. The Sabbath is Prophaned, Christs ordinances neglected, faithfull Ministers more and more discountenanced, and dispised, in such sort as former ages have not equal'd. It went ill with *Rebecka* when the twins strove in her Womb. And it cannot be well with that Nation, when factions are up, And one must be favoured because he is of such a party, & another must not be medled withal because he is of such a party. O who shal wash away the filth of the Land, that these abominations may be purged out, and our breaches again made up!

Where is that zeal of godly *Phineas*, and *Nehemiah*, Magistrates and *Ministers* of Justice, to stand up for God and his truth amongst us? O that such as are in *Authority* would duly consider these three things.

First, that there is no way to uphold a tottering and divided Nation when it shakes, and is ready to fall into peeces about Religion, but to establish Justice and Righteousnes; to incourage the godly; to discourage the wicked. The hearts of the faithfull in the Land are sadded at this day to take notice of the increase of those

those dangerous errors that are so rife amongst us.

Secondly, such magistrates that stand for God, and are zealous for him, and seek the advancement of his truth, These bring much honor to God in their places, more than any others can, and God doth highly honor such. *Phineas* that was *zealous for the Lord*, *God gave to him the Covenant of Peace*; And *Nehemiah* God remembred him in goodness because he had shewed such zeal in punishing of sin; and the greatest honor that ever came to the Kings of *Juda* and *Israel* was this, that they were zealous for God, and suppressed Idolatry, and their greatest dishonour was that they neglected to put down the high places.

Num. 25. 11.

Neh. 13. 22.

2. And secondly as Magistrates, so Parents and Masters are here taught to become the more wary of themselves, that they carefully heed their Families, to keep these *Seducers* out of doors, lest they corrupt their Families; this is not the least of Sathans wiles, to thrust his Instruments, *Jesuits*, *Quakers*, *&c.* to creep into their houses; if the Devil cannot work upon the head, if he can but get footing into a Son or Daughter, or some Servant there, he knows full well that a little *leaven* can sowr the whole lump, and such beginnings have proved the ruine of many families. This doth the Apostle warn men of where he saith, *They creep into houses*, Even where they are least able to resist, *and lead captive simple women*, who being seduced can easily prevail to seduce their Husbands and others.

2 Tim. 3. 6.

3. Thirdly and lastly, this serves for the just reproof of those irreligious persons amongst us, who because they see such difference of opinions in matters of Religion, some Protestants, some Papists, some Anabaptists, some Quakers, some of one Religion and some of another, and all professing they are in the truth, say they will be of no Religion till they see them to agree in one.

Such a one was *Gallio* in the Acts of the Apostles, who when he perceived a difference betwixt *Paul* and the *Jewes*, about certain points of Religion, he would

be neither of the one side nor the other. *Gallio cared nothing for these things.* Many we have amongst us that are of *Gallio* his Religion this day, to these I have this to say. Act. 18. 17

1. That it is no new thing or strange matter to see such diversity of opinions in matters of Faith; thus was it in the times of the Apostles, *Many* false *Teachers* and *Deceivers* were then entred into the World, and many went after them, even in the very prime time of the Church.

2. The diversities of Religion should not be any occasion to make men shake off all care of Religion, but rather should stir them up to be the more diligent to get knowledge, and to labour with the Lord by Prayer, that he would reveal his truth unto them.

3. As for such as will stand by and look on, whilst others contend for the Faith, and will be of no Religion at all, till they see all to be of one mind, such may withall stand by, and see others go to Heaven, when themselves go to Hell.

2. Deceivers pretences.

The second is, By what *shews* and *pretences* these *Deceivers* deceive the Word, What they are. This they do ever by flattering and glosing Language, when their purpose is to deceive; for *Errors* and *Heresies* ever come cloathed with fair colours and probabilities of truth and Reason. And indeed the *Devill* were very foolish if he should think to bewitch men to believe things apparently foul and improbable. No, Sathan is no such novice; but himself and his instruments have learned to promote a bad cause by bad means, by Eloquent and Elegant insinuations, and with such kindness and courtesie as smelleth strong of craft and subtilty to a wise mans Senses. And hence is it that they are in the Scriptures not unfitly compared to *Foxes* and *Wolves*, *Take us the Foxes, the little Foxes which destroy the Vine*, and our Saviour gives warning of such, *Beware of false Prophets which come to you in Sheeps cloathing; but inwardly they are ravening* Cant. 2. 15 Mat. 7. 15.

Wolves,

Wolves. For as these beasts come stealing, and slily enter the flock, taking the wind, lest they should be winded, and use other craft and subtilty, and all to deceive the silly sheep: so these Deceivers, these subtil *Foxes* and *Wolves*, they make shew of plausible Reasons for their damnable Doctrine, that so they may surprise the consciences and souls of men. And after this manner, and under this guise, the Spirit of God hath deciphered, and set them forth in Scripture. Col. 2. 4. *This I say, lest any man beguile you.* The Apostle doth not say, lest any man force you, or by violence drive you from the truth; but *lest any man beguile you with inticing words*, and by deceitful speeches should draw you into error. This warning doth *Paul* give unto the *Elders* of the Church of *Ephesus*, Act. 20. 28, 29. *Take heed unto your selves, &c. for I know this, that after my departure, grievous Wolves shall enter in among you.* A fair warning. The like doth the same Apostle give unto the Church of *Ephesus*, Ephes. 4. 14. *Be no more children, wavering, and carried about with every wind of Doctrine, by the deceits of men, and craftiness, whereby they lye in wait to deceive.* Mark, *They lye in wait to deceive*; Beast-like, that watcheth for his prey. And the Apostle farther speaking of these *Seducers* and *Deceivers*, Rom. 16. 18. this he observes, that *by good words and fair speeches, they deceive the hearts of the simple.* The Devil hath ever had such instruments and servants of his at hand, to work by. Thus he put forth his malice at the very first, wherein his subtilty and craft did appear; *Hath God said* (saith he) Gen. 3. 1. *ye shall not eat of every tree, &c?* Now mark, *God doth know, that if ye eat thereof, your eyes shall be opened.* And so they were indeed, but it was to their shame and ruine. What a goodly pretence is here? he pretends to make them as Gods, when his intent is to make them Devils like himself. And this is that *sheeps cloathing* that our *Deceivers* are cloathed withall. Read over but 2 *Pet.* 2. *Jude* Epist. and Saint *Paul's* Epistles, and we shall

shall clearly see the Nature of *Seducers* and *Deceivers* ever to have been by inticing words, and flattering speeches they seek to deceive. As *Jezabel* painted her face, so these ever put on a false gloss of things, that they may not appear what they are.

To give some short touch of two sorts of these Deceivers. { 1. The *Jesuits* 2. *Quakers*.

Both these allege Scripture. But how? but even as the Devil their Master did of old, either they put somthing to it, or take something from it; or else falsifie the words, or corrupt or change the sence. For the *Jesuits* practice herein, see D. *Reynolds ad Anglo-Seminar.*

And for the *Quakers*, these will sometimes lay claim to Scripture too. But how? you may give a guess by their justifying their railing speeches against some of the most pious and faithful Ministers of Christ in the land, calling them *Hirelings*, *Wolves*, *Devils*, *&c.* and for all this, they have Scripture for their warrant. Did not both *Jeremy*, and *Ezechiel*, and other Prophets, call the Priests of their times by the name of *Hirelings*, that fed themselves, but not their flock, but took hire from their quarters? And did not our Saviour in his time, call some by the name of *Wolves*? *Behold, I send you forth as Lambs amongst Wolves.* And did he not call *Judas* a Devil? *Have I not chosen twelve, and one of you is a Devil?* Ergo, *R. B. Tho. W. N. N.* some of the most godly and faithful Ministers in the land, these must be such in these mens accounts, and proved to be such by Scripture. I blame my self for blotting my Paper, and defiling my Pen, to note their blasphemous and abominable abuse of Scripture. *Bedlam* is the fittest school to teach them better.

So that though these *Deceivers* come with Scripture in their mouths, yet it is none other than Scripture falsified: whereas if the Scripture might be the Judge to determine all doubts, as it ought to be, they are far enough from countenancing these men in their wayes.

And

And this hath been the practice of all *Heretick*s and *Deceivers* that ever sprang up in the Church, to allege Scripture, whereas the same Scripture being rightly understood, makes most against them.

But to return again to those Emissaries of the Church of *Rome*, How many fair and glosing pretences have they to carry on their work?

1. Their goodly and glorious titles they are called by, *Jesuits, Catholicks, &c.*
2. *Antiquity*, and the long continuance of their Doctrine, and the newness of the Protestant Religion; this they press much.
3. Their succession of Bishops, even from *Peter* the Apostle, to this time; which they are never able to prove.
4. Unity and consent in matters of Religion; a thing far enough from that Church.
5. Their Miracles wrought in their Church, which we have none to confirm our Doctrine withall. D. *Reynolds.* Mr. *Baxter* his Key for Catholicks.
6. Their Holiness of life that is amongst them, their Fastings, Praying, Almes-deeds, that is amongst them.
7. To all these may be added, their fair and glosing speeches, which is not the least of their wiles, by the which they deceive the simple. These have been answered unto so often, and by so many, that I shall forbear. Whom Satan himself deceives, usually he makes instruments to deceive others.
8. But never did the Jesuits shew more skill in their art of *Deceiving*, than in our times, in sending these Quakers meetings in so many places of the Land, as in *London, Bristol, Newcastle, &c.* where some have been owned, and proved such. And well may our Quakers boast that they have learned men on their side, when such Emissaries from *Rome* are sent amongst them.

But

But to leave these, and to come to those common *Deceivers* amongst us, that few Countries or Parishes are free from, the *Quakers*. What is the usual deceit they delude men by?

1. They pretend much to the *Spirit* that they have within them, even that infallible Spirit that spake in the Prophets and Apostles, and therefore their sayings and writings are infallible, as the very Scripture it self. Nay more, that to burn their writings, *they might as well burn the Bible*, being wrote by the same Spirit. What can be more disgraceful to the Scriptures, or more abominable to all sober spirits? This is apparent in their Pamphlets, so full of non-sence and railing, where these and the like words are frequent, *Moved from the Lord, Written from the Spirit of the Lord*, and *Given forth from the Lord, &c.* How will these avoid that curse, *Rev. 22, 18.* In this way I confess they come not disguised, but open faced, to delude men. George Fox his reply to Mr. Camesford, and justified by James Naylor, in his Answ. to Fev. Eves, p. 15.

2. But their more subtil way of Deceit is, to cry down the Ministry, and to bring the people out of love with their *Teachers*, which they labour to do by insinuating themselves thus: *Hearken unto us, we teach you the word of the Lord freely, we are no hirelings; 'tis you, and not yours we seek for, &c.* Here we have a White Devil come amongst us: this must needs work upon simple and ignorant souls, that have little or no acquaintance with the word and wayes of God, who are ready to quarrel with their Minister. O these are the men indeed, these teach us the way of God freely, we shall pay no tythes, and from this deceit of theirs they suck no small advantage.

3. The third circumstance is, who they be that are most commonly deceived by them. This though it be not here expressed, is elsewhere noted by Saint *Paul*, as, *They deceive the hearts of the simple*, and, *They beguile unstable souls*. Here we see who they are, viz. poor, blind, and ignorant people, unsettled souls, such Who they be that are deceived by them. Ro. 16. 18. 2 Pet. 2. 14.

as over head receive their Doctrine; these are they that for the most part these *Deceivers* work upon.

2 Tim. 3. 6. More particularly, Saint *Paul* affirmeth, that they *creep into houses, and lead captive simple women.* Simple women, such as are not able to resist them; and women being once seduced, can easily seduce their Husbands, as *Eve Adam*, *Dalilah Sampson*, and *Solomon* by his wives. And experience shews, how that many wise, and learned men have been thus deceived: yet this may not cause us to stagger, for such were the *Scribes* and *Pharisees* of old, they were the great Clerks, and the only wise men of their generation, yet they esteemed basely of Christ, and of his Doctrine; inasmuch as it was said, *Do any of the Scribes and Pharisees believe on him?* Joh. 7. 48.

use. Which may serve to teach us all, to take heed how we pin our Religion upon the sleeves of other men, no not on Princes. But alwayes to have recourse to the word for our guide; *To the Law, and to the Testimony.* Esay 8. 20. And when these *Seducers* shall come and plead to the contrary, to do as the men of *Berea* did, *Search the Scriptures*; Act. 17. whereas such as have *itching eares*, shall not want a *heap of Teachers* after their own hearts, to turn them from the truth, especially in such places that want sound teachers to withstand them.

4. The fourth Circumstance propounded is, the Causes and Reasons why God suffereth such *Deceivers* in the world.

The causes why God suffereth Deceivers in the world.

Indeed, if the Lord so pleased, he could in an instant free his Church from all *Seducers* and *Deceivers*, but it is his pleasure to suffer such, for these and the like Reasons.

1. First, the Lord will have it so, to try those that are his, what *Faith* is in them, and what *love* to the truth, and who they be that will abide with him in temptation. And thus the Lord himself testifieth, saying, *If there arise amongst you a Prophet, a Dreamer of Dreams,* Deut. 13. 1, 2.

for

for your God proveth you, to know whether ye love the Lord your God with all your hearts, &c.

Secondly, that such as hold the truth of God in sincerity, may be known from Hypocrites and Apostates. This is clear by that of the Apostle, *There must be heresies amongst you, that they that are approved may be known.* These *Deceivers* be the Lords fan, brought into the floor of his Church, to separate betwixt the wheat and the chaff. 2. 1 Cor. 11. 19.

Thirdly, the Lord will have it so, that herein, and thereby, he might raise his people out of security; that the more gins and snares are laid before us, the more careful we should be. And hence is it, that some *Canaanites* must still abide amongst the *Israelites*, as pricks in their sides, to keep them watchful, and from security. 3.

Fourthly, the Lord will have it so likewise, for the greater punishment of the wicked and ungodly, who when they have the truth of God taught them, do despise it, and lightly regard it. It is but just with God to give such up to themselves, to be deluded, as the Apostle saith, *Because they received not the truth, in the love of the truth, that they might be saved, God shall send them strong delusions, that they should believe lies, that all might be damned that believe not the truth.* 4. 2 Thes. 2. 10.

If Christ and his Gospel be not received, *Antichrist* with his lying wonders shall: If the truth in *Michaiahs* mouth be not believed, four hundred false Prophets with their lyes shall prevail: And this have we seen in our times, where a faithful Pastor hath been lightly set by, the Lord hath removed him, and set over such a people a *Wolf* in his stead, that many poor souls have become a prey.

Then all that tender the salvation of their souls, may hereby learn daily to pray unto the Lord: *use.*

1. That the Lord would give them faithful Pastors, such as may feed them with wholsom food, *The sincere*

milk of the word; and not suffer the flock to be poysoned with the milk of Dragons, as Jesuits and Quakers feed poor souls withall.

2. That they may have given them the spirit of wisdom and discerning, thereby to discern the spirits, and be able to discern things that differ.

3. That the Lord would give unto them the spirit of meekness and subjection, to submit to the truth, with honest and good hearts, that these *Seducers* may be kept out from amongst them.

Which confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. He that is such a one, is a Deceiver, and an Antichrist.

* HItherto of the Proposition, *Many Deceivers are entred into the World.*

2. Their Description.

The second particular at first propounded, is the Apostles Description of this *Deceiver*.

He is here described two wayes.
1. By his Doctrine; *They confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh.*
2. By their quality and condition; *He that is such a one, is a deceiver, and an Antichrist.*

1. For the Doctrine, *They confess not, &c.*

The meaning of the Apostle is, that they taught, and went about to make the world believe, That the Jesus Christ, which should be the Messiah, promised of old to the Patriarks, and in the *fulness of time manifested in the flesh*, as the Apostle testifieth, that this Christ is not yet come in the flesh. Gal.4.4.

Now such *Deceivers* have been in the Church, and such *Deceivers* are in the Church at this day; and these are of two sorts.

1. Some that absolutely deny Christ to be come in the Flesh.

2. Such as do it not in plain words, but by consequence only.

First,

First, those that absolutely deny Christ to be come in the Flesh, are the unbelieving *Jewes*, that thus always taught it, and at this day stand in it, that the Lord Jesus Christ, upon whom we depend for life and salvation, was not that *Messiah* promised unto their Fathers; But they look for him yet to come, who shall be a great and mighty Prince in the earth, and by whom they hope one day to be brought home again to the possession of their antient inheritance, the land of *Jury*.

A most damnable opinion. For answer whereof, let this Argument suffice.

If all those things which were promised, and foretold concerning the *Messiah*, are fully accomplished, and fully and perfectly performed in our Lord Jesus Christ, and in none other; then was he the true *Messiah*, and none other is farther to be looked for. *Argument*

But all those things which were foretold touching the *Messiah*, are all performed in Christ;

Therefore is he the true *Messiah*, and none other is to be looked for.

Touching the *Messiah*, these things were foretold.

1. That when he did come, he should not be known, nor acknowledged to be the *Messiah*; but should be refused, and rejected of the *Jewish* Nation.

He hath neither form nor beauty, when we shall see him, there shall be no form that we should desire him. He is despised, and rejected of men. The stone which the builders refused, is the head of the corner. Isa. 53. 2, 3. Psal. 118. 22.

This was clearly performed in Christ, *He came amongst his own, and his own received him not.* Joh. 1. 4.

2. It was foretold that he should be born of a Virgin. *Behold, a Virgin shall conceive, and bear a Son, and shall call his name Emanuel.* So was our Saviour born of a pure Virgin; and *she*, that is, the Virgin *Mary*, *shall bring forth a Son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus.* Isa. 7. 14. Mat. 1. 21.

3. It was prophecyed, that the place of his birth
Mich. 5. 2. should be *Bethlem. And thou Bethlem Ephrata, though thou be little among the thousands of Juda, out of thee shall he come, that shall be Ruler in Israel.* And at *Beth-*
Mat. 2. 1. *lem* was born Christ our Saviour.

4. It was prophecyed, that at the time of his birth all the Infants in the Country should be slain. *Thus*
Ier. 31. 15. *saith the Lord, a voice was heard in Ramah, a mourning and bitter weeping, Rahel weeping for her children, &c.*
Mat. 2. 16. This was fulfilled in Christ. *Then Herod sent forth his men of war, and slew, &c.*

5. It was prophecyed, that before the Messiah should come himself, there should go a Messenger before him, to prepare the way before him, *Behold, I will*
Mal. 3. 1. *send my Messenger, and he shall prepare my way before*
Luk. 1. 17 *me.* This was fulfilled in *John* the Baptist, who prepared the people for the Lord.

6. It was prophecyed, that for his estate in the
Zach 9. 9. world, he should be poor, and of no reputation. *Behold, thy King cometh unto thee poor, &c.* Now how truly was this fulfilled in our Saviour, that himself
Mat. 8. 20. professeth, *The Foxes have holes, and the birds of the air nests: but the Son of man hath no where to reare his head.*

Esa. 61. 1. 7. It was prophecyed of him, that he should *preach good tidings to the poor, that he should bind up the broken-hearted, &c.* How was this fulfilled in our blessed
Mat. 4. 23. Saviour, *who went about preaching the Gospel, &c?*

8. It was prophecyed, that before his Passion, he
Zach. 9. 9. should ride through *Jerusalem* upon an Ass. This
Mat. 21. 7. was fulfilled in our Saviour.

9. It was prophecyed, that he should be betrayed
Psal. 22. into the hands of his Enemies, by his own familiar
Ioh. 13. friend. This was fulfilled by *Judas.*

10. It was prophecyed of him, that he should be sold for thirty pieces of Silver. This was fulfilled in
Mat. 26. 15. Christ. *What will ye give me,* saith *Judas? and they appointed him thirty pieces of silver.*

11. I

11. It was prophecyed, that he should be broken, and buffetted of the Jews; and fulfilled in Christ. Esa. 50. 6. Mat. 26. 67.

12. It was prophecyed of Christ, that he should be put to death amongst thieves and malefactours: so was Christ betwixt two thieves. Esa. 57. Luke 23.

13. It was prophecyed of Christ, that after his death he should rise again. *Thou wilt not leave my soul in Hell, neither wilt thou suffer thy holy one to see corruption.* Fulfilled in Christ: *The third day he rose again.* Psal. 22. Mat. 28.

14. It was prophecyed of Christ, that after all this, he should ascend, and go up into Heaven, and there sit at the right hand of God the Father. *The Lord said to my Lord, sit thou on my right hand, &c.* This was likewise fulfilled in our blessed Saviour; *He was received into Heaven.* Psal. 110. Mar. 16. 19.

Now it being thus apparent, that all those things which were foretold touching the *Messiah*, were all determined, and fulfilled in Christ, and in none other, but in Christ alone; It must needs follow, that he was the *Messiah* to come; that he was the man, and that we must look for none other.

This might farther be confirmed, to shew how the time appointed for the coming of the *Messiah*, should be in the time of the fourth *Monarchy*, which was,

The *Roman* Monarchy, or Empire, as *Daniel* foretold. Dan. 2. 44

And in the time of the second Temple, as *Haggai* foretold. Hag. 2, 8.

And at such time as the Scepter was departed from *Judah*, as old *Jacob* foretold. Gen. 49. 10.

And that he should come of the seed of *David*, as *Jeremy* foretold. Ier. 23. 5, 6.

All which particulars were fully accomplished in *Christ* our Saviour.

And therefore was he that true and undoubted *Messiah*, promised of old, and already come in the flesh, and in vain do the *Jews* look for another.

Use 1. And surely this serves much for the confirmation and strengthning of our faith, that that Lord Jesus Christ whose name we bear, whose Religion we profess, and upon whom we depend for life and salvation, is that very *Seed of the Woman* that should bruise the Serpents head, and he in whom all the Redeemed of the Earth shall be saved, and is in all points the *King*, *Priest*, and *Prophet* of his Church, and the very true Certain and undoubted *Messiah*, that was promised of old, Insomuch that all things which were foretold touching the *Messiah* to come, do fitly, fully, and only agree to him and none else.

2. Secondly, this serves farther for our *Instruction*, in that hereby we see how God in his Judgment leaves many people in the world to themselves to be seduced by their own imaginations, and deceived by their own evill hearts, against the plain and manifest truth of Scripture: for what truth can be made more plain than this, That Christ is come in the flesh, and is the true *Messiah* and *Saviour* of the World? and yet the *Jews* are held in unbelief unto this day.

Quest. But what may be the Reasons, the Scriptures being so cleer and plain, that the *Jews* and others likewise should remain thus in unbelief?

Answ. There are these Principal causes.

1. Their natural blindness, wherein we are all born and continue, untill the Lord be pleased to open the eyes of our minds, and to inlighten our understanding. *The Natural man perceiveth not the things that are of God*, as we see it plain in *Nichodemus* a Doctor amongst the *Jews*, otherwise wise and learned, yet altogether ignorant in the very first and main Principle of Christian Religion, the necessity of Regeneration.

1 Cor. 2. 14.

2. Because there are some whom God leaves in their sins, and to their own hearts lusts, on whom he is minded to glorifie himself in their just Reprobation, leaving them to their natural ignorance and blindness, as it is said, *As many as were ordained to Eternal life believed*,

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leaved, others were not wrought upon, but rather hardned by the word. So is the *Preaching of the Crosse foolishnesse to them that perish*, And *if the Gospel be hid, it is hid to them that perish, whom the God of this world hath blinded their minds.* So that unto wicked men whom God hath reserved to perdition, those things that are most plain in Scripture, either they are so mystical that they conceive them not, or if they do, they are but foolishnesse unto them, they believe them not. 1 Cor. 1. 18. 2 Cor. 4. 3.

3. The want of Gods grace to inlighten them, and instruct them; when the Disciples would know of our Saviour, the reason why he spake to the *Jews* in Parables, so as they were not able to understand him, His answer is, *To you it is given to know the Mysteries of the Kingdome; but to them it is not given*; And of the *Iewes* it is that the Apostle speaketh thus, *God hath given them the Spirit of slumber, eyes that they should not see, and eares that they should not hear unto this day.* 3

And thus much concerning the *Iewes* who expresly deny Christ to be come in the flesh.

Secondly, there be others that deny Christ to be come in the flesh: but not in words and plain termes as the former, but by consequence of Doctrine, and these are of two sorts. 2. Sort that deny Christ to be come in the flesh.

1. Such as in word confess Christ, but in their Doctrine deny him, such were the *Arians* of old, who denied Christ to be equal with God, and he that doth not confess that Christ is equal unto God, denieth Christ in the flesh. *Ariani hoc Negant licet verbis fateantur. Aug.*

And such are the Papists, who cunningly and covertly deny Christ, howsoever they bear his Name, and have it in their mouths.

1. They deny him to be our alone *King*, *Priest*, and *Head* to rule over our Souls and Consciences, In that they would have us believe that the *Pope* a mortal and sinfull man is Christs Vicar, and Vice-gerent upon Earth, and hath power over our Consciences, to make

Laws

Laws and Ordinances to bind the same; besides those which Christ hath made, and given to his Church, which upon pain of Condemnation they must obey.

2. They deny him to be our Allsufficient *Prophet*, in disgracing the Scriptures; saying, they are imperfect, and contain not in them all things needfull to salvation, but that we must admit of certain unwritten verities (as they term them) but indeed vanities, to be equal to the Scriptures.

3. They deny him to be our All-sufficient *Priest* two wayes.

1. In that they offer up from day to day unto God in their masse, a *Propitiatory* Sacrifice for the quick and dead, as if that Sacrifice of Christ *once for all* and for ever, were not sufficient.

2. In that they make other *Mediators* and *Intercessors* unto God for us than Christ himself, Saints and Angels, and the Virgin *Mary*, *&c.*

4. In the matter of *Justification*, how is the Righteousnes of Jesus Christ laid aside imputed by faith; and their own good works and merits pleaded and stood upon, their Almes-deeds, Fastings, Prayers, Pilgrimages, &c? Thus *the blood of Jesus Christ which cleanseth from all sin* is laid aside; and their *Masses*, and the *Popes* pardon is taken up.

1 Joh. 1.

Now what is this but in effect to deny Christ to be come in the flesh? who so denies a *Diamond* the vertue of a *Diamond*, doth he not in effect deny it to be a *Diamond*?

2. Sort that deny *Christ to be come in the flesh* are that sort of people amongst us called *Quakers*, who may also most justly be charged with this crime.

A sort of people that howsoever they go under the name of Christians, and would be thought the most perfect Saints on Earth, men that have attained to a sinless condition, and *perfect*; of such a refined sort are they, they may not salute any by the way, or bid him

him *God-speed*, though he be their Superior, for defiling their tongues, They must *know no man according to the flesh*, be he *Magistrate*, *Minister*, *Parent* or *Master*, These owe no observance to any, unless it be such of their own way.

I must needs do these men that Justice, that they say they own Jesus Christ to be come in the flesh, and sometimes speak of his Death, Resurrection and Ascension, this they can do. And indeed I do not find amongst the antient Hereticques that ever were in the Church since the time of Christ to this day, that any in expres words did ever deny Christ to be come in the flesh, yet no professed Christians have done it; Some have held that Christ took on him an imaginary body onely, Some have held that he took an *Aerial* body, Some a *Cælestial* body, Some that he took a body, but no *Humane* Soul, And some again, that Christs humane Nature was swallowed up of his Divine nature, all which in effect deny Christ to be come in the flesh. But such a hotch botch of opinions held out by the *Quakers* touching Christ and mans Salvation by Christ, was never held forth before; you shall hear some of the greatest *Rabbies* of their Sect speak, and herein I shall do them no wrong, whilst I allege their own words, published to the World, and when you have heard them speak, tell me whether these people do not *deny christ to be come in the flesh*.

See the grand Impostor Examined. See the Relation of the Northern Quakers, *pag.* 22. See Mr. *Billingleys* defence of the Scripture. *pag.* 116.

We shall begin with the *Quakers* Oracle, *James Nayler*, how far did his Pride transport him to take unto himself the same divine honour which is proper and peculiar only to the person of Christ, alone blessed for ever?

This he justified before sufficient witnesses, *That he was as Holy, Just, and good as God himself.*

In a letter of his to one in *Lancaster*, saith thus, *That he that expected to be saved by that Jesus Christ that dyed at Jerusalem should be deceived.*

And this was likewise affirmed by another of that gange,

The perfect Pharisey. *p.* 8. gange, *That he was not such a fool as to hope to be saved by that Jesus Christ that dyed at Jerusalem sixteen hundred years agoe.*

See Mr. *Farmer* his Mystery of ungodliness. For the Scripture, how is this slighted by these men, calling it an *Inkie Letter*? And that they (the Quakers) have according to measure the same infallible Spirit by the which the Prophets and Apostles themselves spake, *And that to burn their Queries or Writings, you might as well have condemned the Scriptures to the fire*, they have as full a measure of the Spirit as the Penners of the Scriptures had.

Georg. Fox, and *Rich. Hubberthorn* truths defence, *p.* 43. That the same gift to work *Miracles* they have, as was amongst the Apostles themselves.

Ibid. *p.* 44. They deny the *Humanity* of the Son of God, and affirm that Christ hath but one Body, *and that is the Church.*

Truths defence. *p.* 78, 79. And for the Doctrine of *Justification*, this is quite overthrown by these men, calling it a blind Doctrine, that we teach, *That our Righteousness which justifieth is not within us.*

James Nayler against *Higgenson*, *pag.* 21. And elsewhere most blasphemously he affirmeth, *That he that hath a covering no nearer than above the stars, will one day be found naked.*

Ibid. *pag.* 8. It is lamentable to read over the Writings of these men, and to consider by what spirit of error they are led, and by whom the ordinances of the Gospel, and of Jesus Christ are so depraved, if not quite overthrown.

Gal. 1. 8. The Apostle saith, *But though we or an Angel from Heaven Preach unto you otherwise than that which we have Preached unto you, let him be accursed.* How will these men avoid this curse that strike at the root, and seek to overthrow the very foundation of *Evangelical* Doctrine, and of a Christians belief? which how they do in all the Principle parts thereof, I shall refer the Reader to that piece lately Printed, Intituled *Hell broke loose*, Penned by Mr. *Thomas underhill*, where you shall find the particulars of many of their most damnable

and

and blasphemous tenents discovered under their own hands, which they are not able to except against, but must needs own to their own perpetual shame.

O lay this to heart you that take upon you the name of *Christians*, and glory in that name, and yet by your erroneous opinions or ungodly lives deny Christ. How many thousand poor Souls have ye been Instruments to delude, and bring to destruction, without great mercy and timely Repentance? and what a sad account have you one day to make for such? better the ten Plagues of *Egypt* had lighted upon you, than this Judgment, to be given over to a spirit of delusion; you are fallen from Christianity, in that the true Christ is denied by you; and what ordinance of Jesus Christ is owned by you? the Preaching of the Word, the Sacraments, Prayer, singing of Psalms, &c. are not all these laid aside? What would Sathan himself do more, or desire more, if God should give him leave, to overthrow as much as in him lay, the Kingdome of his Son, and to erect his own Church of darkness in the World; Would he not teach your doctrine that you teach? Would not the Devil himself say? Take heed that you hear not these Ministers, they are not true Ministers of Jesus Christ, joyn not in Communion with their Churches, they are not true Churches of Christ; partake not of their Ordinances, they are not the true Ordinances of Jesus Christ; were not this the ready way to advance Sathans Kingdome, and the ready way to overthrow the Kingdome of Jesus Christ? And will you dare to promote Sathans cause, and Sathans Kingdome by speaking his words, and doing his work, by drawing men from Christ to Sathan? Said will be the account of such one day. *use.* 1.

Secondly, this may serve to admonish all humble and sincere Christians, as you would escape the Snares of the Devil, and the spreading Errors of these times, 2.

1. To

1. To be carefull not to expose your selves to the temptations of *Seducers*, which they do that frequent their *meetings*, though it be but out of novelty, no way minding their wayes, or approving of them; what is this but to tempt God? and hereby have many been deluded. How often in the Scriptures are we bidden to *avoid them*, *to turn away from such*, *to beware of them*, *not to go after them*; yea, *not so much as to bid such God-speed*? such as take liberty, either to be familiar with such, or to frequent their meetings, have no promise from God that he will keep them.

Rom. 16. 17. 2 Tim. 3. 5, 6. Mat. 7. 15. 2 Ioh. 10.

2. Labour to be Rooted and Grounded in the Truth; for want of this many have been seduced; these *Quakers* were never at first well Grounded in the Truth, *They received not the Truth in the Love of the Truth*, and hence is it that God gives up so many to strange delusions to believe lyes.

2 Thes. 2. 10.

3. Prize more the publick Ministers of the Word, these watch for mens souls, and hence is it that these seducers labour so instantly to draw men from their Ministers, and to bring them out of love with their Teachers, and Guides, and such are easily seduced.

4. Be frequent and often in Prayer, that God would stablish us in the Truth. Prayer is part of our spiritual Armour, wherewith we must go out against our spiritual Enemies. How frequent is *David* in this duty? and much more need had we to commend our selves to him, *Who is able to keep us from falling*. And thus much for the first part of their Doctrine, *They confess not that Iesus Christ is come in the flesh*.

Psal. 119. Iud. 24.

He that is such a one is a Deceiver, and an Anti-christ.

Here the Apostle describes this *Deceiver* by his quality and condition, that is, such a one is a *Deceiver* and an *Antichrist*, Meaning indeed, that whosoever doth not

acknowledg, but thinketh within himself, and swadeth others, that Jesus Christ is not yet *come the flesh*, the same is a *Deceiver* in an high degree, an Adversary and an Enemy to Jesus Christ.

Where observe, that he that denieth the Lord Jesus Christ, is said to be,

1. *A Deceiver.*
2. *An Antichrist.*

1. A *Deceiver. He that is such a one, is a Deceiver*, i. e. is no ordinary *Deceiver*, but a *Deceiver* in an high degree.

Hence we learn, that of all Deceivers, the Soul-Deceiver, *i. e.* he that goeth about to deceive the Souls of men, and to corrupt and poison them with erroneous and false opinions in matters of Religion, is the most pernicious and dangerous. *Doct.* Of all Deceivers the soul-deceiver is the most dangerous. Mat. 16.

As nothing is so dear and pretious as a mans soul, so no loss is comparable to the loss of it; *What shall it profit a man* (saith Christ) *to win the whole world, and to lose his own soul?* If a man be cozened and deceiv'd of his goods, that loss may be recovered again; if it be not, it is but the loss of that he must one day lose, and leave behind him: But if his soul be deceived, and led into dangerous and damnable opinions, in which he dyes, and his soul be thereby lost, that loss will never be recovered again; *For what shall a man give for the Ransom of his soul?* And therefore if he be a wretched man that deceiveth another of his goods, what is he then, that deceiveth a man of the salvation of his soul?

It is true indeed, there is no deceit like unto this: But alas! how shall I know such a soul-deceiver, from a teacher sent from God? *Quest.*

This our Saviour himself answereth, *Ye shall know them by their fruits.* *Answ.* Mat. 7. 16.

Now the fruits by which a *Deceiver* may be known, are principally these two.

1. He comes on his own head, and takes upon him

to

to teach and instruct others, and yet was never thereunto called, nor sent of God: *They ran, but I sent them not.* And by this mark are all false teachers and *Deceivers* known; *I have not sent them, neither have I commanded them, yet have they prophesied in my name.* Jer. 14. 14. And thus saith our Saviour, *They come to you, i. e.* they come of themselves, without any calling from God. And Saint *Jude* saith, *They creep into the Church*, whereas on the contrary, those that are true and faithful teachers, have a lawful calling thereunto; a lawful calling from the Church, and an inward calling from God. *How can he teach unless he be sent?* Rom. 10.

2. A false teacher and a *Deceiver*, may be known by this; the Doctrine which he teacheth is contrary to the sound and wholsom Doctrine of the Holy Scriptures.

As for example; If that which he teacheth, do either directly, or by just consequence, overthrow the Commandments of the Law, or any Article of the Christian Faith, contained in the Apostles Creed, surely he is a *Deceiver*, a false Prophet.

Whereas on the contrary, a most sure mark of a true Minister of Christ is, that he teach and deliver none other thing, than that which is agreeable to the Word of God. By this authority spake all the *Prophets* of old, *Thus saith the Lord*; and *The mouth of the Lord hath spoken it*; and whosoever he be, yea though he be an Angel from Heaven, that teacheth any other Doctrine, is to be held accursed; and such a one is a *Deceiver*. Gal. 1. 8.

Use 1. This shews by what spirit the *Quakers* are led, that speak so reproachfully of the Scripture, calling it *A Letter, a dead Letter.* A language fetcht from *Rome*, and a piece of Rhetorick they have learned of their teachers the *Iesuits*, who give these, and the like disgraceful words of the sacred Scripture. Of what credit their speeches may and ought to be, judg ye, by these passages of Scripture; *The law of the Lord is perfect,*

fect, converting the soul, &c. *The Commandments of the Lord are pure, inlightning the eyes*; and, *Thy word hath quickned me*. And it is of the written Word that the Apostle speaketh, that it *is mighty through God*; *The power of God to salvation*. This rule is laid aside by these men, who never press their Proselites *to search the Scripture*, but to look to the light in their consciences. Let them but shew where ever Christ or his Apostles gave forth any such exhortation to any of their hearers, only to look to the light within them. The noble *Bereans* did not so, but searched the Scriptures, *whether those things the Apostles taught them were so*. This rule being laid aside by these men, they prove themselves the *Deceivers* of mens souls. Psal. 119. 50. Rom. 10. 17. Act. 17. 11.

Secondly, this may mind us of that *Exhortation* of the Apostle, *Try all things, and keep that which is good*; and that also of Saint *John*, *Believe not every spirit*, but *try the spirits, whether they be of God*. *Solomon* makes it the property of a fool, to believe every thing: *The simple will believe every thing*: *But the prudent will consider his steps*. And never had Christians more need to look to themselves, than in these dayes; and the rather, because our nature is so prone to suck in error instead of truth. The Proverb is, *A man should sell money after his Father*: Which is spoke not in distrustfulness, but in prudence. Much more wary and circumspect ought we to be in matters of Religion, which so highly concern our souls. And thus much of the first particular, that is here affirmed of these men; *He is a Deceiver*. 2. 1. Thes. 5. 21. 1 Joh. 4. 1. Pro. 14. 15.

And an Antichrist.

He is a Deceiver and an Antichrist.

THis word *Antichrist*, in the general acceptation of the word, signifieth such a one as is contrary to Christ, or an Adversary to Christ; and in this sense may every wicked and ungodly man be said to be an Antichrist. 2. An Antichrist.

But the Scriptures inform us more specially of a two-fold Antichrist.

1. A Doctrinal *Antichrist.* Such a one the Apostle hath spoke of before, *That denieth Christ to be come in the flesh.*

2. A Political *Antichrist*, or one that is so called in respect of his power and authority he shall exercise in the Church. Of the first before.

The second sort the Apostle seems to speak of, as a one particular man in the Church, κατ' ἐξοχήν, by way of eminency or singularity, *that shall exalt himself above every thing that is called God.*

2 Thes. 2. 4.

And this *Antichrist* who is Christs Adversary, is spoken of one man, yet may be understood of a succession of men in the same authority and power, as some take the words; To be an Arch-Deceiver of the world, and that special notorious Antichrist so often pointed at in the Scriptures, by the name of Ὁ Ἀντίχριστος, that Antichrist, that *man of sin.*

This some say is the *Turk*, others say, he is some special *person* yet to come; yet by all tokens and marks, it can be none other than the *Pope*, and Bishop of *Rome.*

And for proof hereof, do but consider well of the one place of the Apostle, where that Antichrist, the man of sin is described.

2 Thes. 2. 4.

Which is an Adversary, and exalteth himself against all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as sit as God, in the Temple of God, shewing himself that he is God.

Marks of Anti-christ.

Now if all these marks and tokens are found in him and cannot be found in any other, then must the Pope and Bishop of Rome be that *Antichrist* that spoke of.

1.

1. Mark of *Antichrist* is his *pride*, *He exalteth himself against all that is called God.* Where note, that the Apostle doth not say, he exalteth himself above God but *above all that are called Gods.* Now who are the

that are called Gods? are they not *Kings, Princes, and Potentates* of the Earth? is it not of these the Psalmist speaketh, *I have said ye are Gods*? These are thus honoured by God himself, being his Deputies, and Lieutenants upon earth. Psal. 82. 6.

Now was there ever any (the Pope excepted) that this exalted himself above all these Gods on earth, Princes and Magistrates, Kings and Emperours? it is a thing so well known, as needeth no proof.

Hath he not made the Emperours themselves, the greatest Gods on earth, like poor subjects, to wait at his table, crowned them with his feet, made them hold his stirrop, and hold his horse? Behold here the son of pride indeed.

A second mark is in the same verse, *He doth sit as God in the Temple of God, shewing himself that he is God.* Now where was there ever any that did thus, but the *Pope*? 2.

1. He sits in the *Church* and *Temple* of God; not amongst the *Turks*, *Barbarians*, and *Infidels*, but even in the *Church* in the Christian world; where Christ dwelleth, even there shall this *Antichrist* be.

2. The Apostle addeth further, *that he sitteth there as God*, that is, look what God useth to do, that will he do; He will be the head of the whole Church, he will prescribe Laws, & Canons to the whole Christian world, prescribe a *Word* of his own, *Sacraments* of his own, a *Church* Ministry of his own, bind mens consciences at his will, pardon sin, bless whom he liketh, and curse whom he listeth, and is content to take this title to himself, *our Lord God the Pope.*

3 Mark is in the 9th verse, *His coming is by the effectual working of Satan, with all power, and signes, and lying wonders.* And is not this found true in the *Pope*, and the Popish Church? how much do they boast of their Miracles and Wonders wrought in their Church? and by the Reliques of some of their Saints, as may make chatter ears to tingle? And no marvel, since 3.

the Apostle saith, *His coming is by the effectual working of Satan*; all the help that Satan can give, he shall have, for the advancement of his Kingdom, therefore must needs be wonderful in power.

4. 4 Mark of *Antichrist* is laid down v. 8. where the *word* is in our English Translation, *That wicked man*, in the Original is ὁ Ἄνομος, which you shall find in the Note upon the place, signifieth that *lawless fellow*, or one that will be subject to no law; and where can you find such a one besides the *Pope*? He is indeed ὁ Ἄνομος, a lawless man, for no law can bind him, but overtops all laws at his pleasure, both Divine and Humane, he alone can dispense with all; and so have some of his *Sycophants* written of him, *he is not subject to any law*. Yea, if the Pope at his pleasure should draw infinite souls into Hell, no man may say unto him, *Why doest thou this*?

Legi non subjacet ullis.

Now what an arrogant person is this? how have the people of God cause to beware of such a Monster? I pass by other Marks given of him by Saint *John*, *Rev.* 13. 17. all which, as they agree to the Pope, and to him alone, that the Papists cannot shew any other in the whole world, to whom they do so properly belong, and therefore of necessity must needs be that ὁ Ἀντίχριστος, that special Antichrist, or Adversary of Christ, that is so often pointed at in the Scriptures.

Which, howsoever he shall prevail for a time, and the greatest part of the earth shall receive the mark of the Beast; yet, though I be no Prophet, nor the son of a Prophet, yet when I consult so many learned Expositors on the Revelation, both Antient and Modern, with those also that profess Judgement in the *Arcana* learning, I am much induced to believe that joyful time draws on apace, when that joyful song shall be sung out, *She is fallen, she is fallen, even Babylon that great City*; and the year 666, the number of his name, is much looked upon, when *Antichrists* Kingdom will

go

to wrack; howsoever certain it is, that his Destruction is at hand, for the Scripture must be fulfilled.

This lets us see the great Love and Goodness of God towards his Church, that is thus pleased to acquaint us with such enemies we are to encounter withall in our way to Heaven, what difficulties and hardship we must look to meet withall, that the Lord should thus inform us of the worst that shall befall us, that when Afflictions, Persecutions, and Tryals come we might be prepared, when we can say, this is no strange thing but what we looked for. But we will stay our selves upon this, that as those Scriptures are fulfilled, touching the Saints sufferings, we confidently believe that those promises shall likewise be fulfilled in the Churches deliverance, *and that the Rod of the Wicked shall not alwayes rest upon the backs of the Righteous*, and that as the Scriptures shall be fulfilled, touching the reign of Antichrist, and rage of the wicked against the Church; So the *sure Promises of God* shall be fulfilled, which God in his due time will not fail to accomplish. *use.* 1.

Secondly, this serves to awaken the men of this age, and such as bear the mark of the beast upon them, that they come out from amongst that Antichristian crew; *lest they partaking of their sin, partake also of their punishment*; take we heed that we be not found amongst the number of those that are *Antichrists*, Christs Enemies. 2.

And O when will the eyes of our Enemies the *Quakers* be once opened to see that they do but fight under Antichrists banner? which they do whilst they shew themselves such profest Enemies to his Ministers and the ordinances of the Gospel, holding indeed the Papists Doctrine, as the greatest part of their Religion (if I may so call it) is made up of the main work of Sathan, being to draw men to desert the Ministry, and then they are easily drawn to desert the Truth: For,

if the *Wolf* can but separate the Sheep from the Shepheard, the poor sheep is easily made a prey. And if these men did but duly take notice how God hath owned the faithfull Ministers of our Church with the conversion of many thousand souls, how exemplary they are in their lives to their flock, he must needs be given up of God, and blinded by Sathan, to style such Antichristian; besides, do but consider what kind of Ministers those are that are thus maligned, hated, and reviled, but such as Drunkards, Swearers, Sons of *Belial* do most hate and detest, no better argument can there be to prove these the Ministers of Christ.

Vers. 8.

Look to your selves, that ye lose not the things that we have done; but that we may receive a full reward.

HItherto of the *Proposition* and *Description* of false *Teachers*, Now of the *Exhortation* it self, *vers.* 8. *Look to your selves, &c.* and then of the *Reasons* to inforce it. *v.* 8, 9.

This 8. *verse* contains in it an *Exhortation* to this *Lady* and her *Children* to beware of the *Deceivers* before spoken of, that they be not poysoned with their *Heresies* and damnable *Doctrine*.

Look to your selves.

q. d. These are dangerous fellows, and great is the hurt that commeth by them, where people are ready to listen unto them, and to believe them. O therefore take you good heed, I beseech you, to your selves, that you be not poysoned with their damnable opinions, as some others have been; *Look to your selves.*

And such like Exhortations are very frequent in Scripture, as that of our Saviour, *Beware of false Prophets which come to you in Sheeps cloathing, but inwardly are ravening Wolves.* And again, *There shall arise* Mat. 7. 15.

false

false Christs, and false Prophets, and shew signs and wonders, and shall deceive if it were possible the very Elect. Mat. 24.

And this Caveat doth the Apostle *Paul* give unto the Church, *That there should grievous Wolves enter into the flock, speaking perverse things, and drawing Disciples after them, therefore watch.* 24. Act. 20. 20

From this *Exhortation* of our Apostle we may observe what unconstancy and unsoundness there is in people to continue in the truth, even in those that have made a glorious profession of the same for a time; a little thing will make us forsake the true Faith and Religion of Jesus Christ, if the Lord support us not; and this we shall find true in the World, whether we respect the *Doctrine* of Christ, or the *practice* of the same. *Doct.* There is much inconstancy in people to continue in the truth.

1. For the *Doctrine* of Christ, Alass, who doth not see how ready we are to fall from the truth of it once received? was their any more couragious and forward than *Peter* was, who promised and protested, though all others denied Christ, yet he would dye with him rather than deny him? and the *Galatians* so joyfully received *Paul*, and imbraced his Ministry with that affection of love, that *Paul* himself saith of them, *That they would have plucked out their eyes to have done him good*, yet afterwards complains of them thus, *O foolish Galatians who hath bewitched you, that you should not obey the truth*, but looked to be justified by works, against that Doctrine he had formerly taught them. Mat. 26. Gal. 4. 15. Gal. 3. 1.

2. In the *Practice of Religion* we find,

1. There are some who make a fair beginning and entrance into it, but finding it not to stand with their natural affections and carnal interests, grow weary of it and give it over. This was the case of the young man that came to Christ, he had a months mind to Heaven and Salvation at last; but he liked not Christs condition, *Of selling all that he had and giving it to the Poor.* Mat. 19.

2. Some again there are that make not only an en-

trance into Religion, but rejoyce therein for a time, yet fall away like those hearers whom our Saviour compares to the stony ground; and such were those
Joh. 5. 35. *Jews* who for a time rejoyced in the *light*, and ministery of the *Baptist*; but afterwards grew weary of it. Thus was it with *Demas*, who but he? Thus was it with *Simon Magus* who believed for a time, and many that followed our Saviour, which afterwards forsook him and fell away. Scripture examples and daily experience proves this too true in many, that both in Doctrine and Practice our Nature is very inclinable to decline the truth.

Heb. 6. 4, 5. The Apostle speaks of some, *who have been inlightned and tasted off the good Word of God and Powers of*
2 Pet. 2. 20 *the World to come, yet fall away*, And of others Saint *Peter* speaketh, *such as have escaped the pollution of the World, yet may be intangled therewith, so as their latter end may be worse than the beginning*; our own dayes and times wherein we live have given us plentifull examples of many that have made a glorious shew and profession of Religion, yet have fallen most fouly and fearfully, even to the hating of those they formerly loved, and persecuting that truth they formerly professed.

Men now a dayes have itching ears and desire novelties, like the old *Israelites* who liked *Manna* well at the first, but at last their Souls began to *loath it*; fulness begat fulsomness in them. O would to God this were not the case of so many wanton professors amongst us, that that *word* they formerly took so much delight in, travelled about to hear, and laboured to affect others withall, were not now laid aside! a sign they were never built upon the Rock Christ, nor received the truth at first, *in the love of the truth*. Such
2 Thes. 2. 10. mens first setting out in the profession of Religion was not upon right grounds, that in *Judgement* and *Practice* they fall away, the Reason is cleer and plain.

Besides

Because our understanding being more Natural than Spiritual, we are most inclinable to that which is connatural unto us; and hence is it that the Apostle saith, *That the wisdome of the flesh is Enmity to God*, not an *Enemy, but Enmity it self*; and that *the Natural man perceives not the things that are of God*. No marvail then that the nature of man inclines more to *Error* than to the *Truth*; to wise men rather than to the most wise God; to *traditions* rather than to the *word* of God; to our own *devices* rather than to Gods *precepts*; to Ceremonies (as at this day) rather than to the weighty things of the Law; doth not the Apostle warn us *to take heed* and to *beware* of these, and all to shew that this nature of ours is most inclinable unto them? And hence it is that the Apostle writing to the *Philippians*, saith, *That it grieved him not to write the same things often unto them, for this is a sure thing*, (saith he) as that which tended to their preservation against false teachers, and he subjoyns a threefold premonition, *Beware of dogs*; *Beware of evill workers*; *Beware of the concision*; letting them know that their Nature was very inclinable that way. *Reas.* Rom. 8. Phil. 3. 1.

The consideration of this truth, that we are naturally more inclined to error than the truth, should humble us in respect of our natural blindness and ignorance in heavenly things, and learn us rather to suspect our own Judgments than to Question every thing we understand not, and to labour to get our hearts equally bent both against *Heretical Doctrine*, and Prophane conversation, and to hold fast to the truth. *Vse 1.*

Secondly, it may serve likewise for our *Instruction*, when we shall see such as have made profession of Religion to fall back unto *Sects* and *Heresies*, or sinfull practices, not to be offended, for all are not of the Church that are in the Church. Some are tyed only by a thread of outward profession and not united by faith, *Himineus* and *Philetus* were two great lights in their time, yet fell away; So was *Demas* and others very *2.*

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ry forward professors in the time of Christ, yet their Garments fell off, and their nakedness did appear; such have been, and such will be.

3. And last of all, this may serve to exhort all that have received grace, and have given up their names to Christ, as they would approve themselves Christians indeed, to *look to themselves*, and to take heed of falling back either in *Judgment*, or in their *ways*; though it be true the godly cannot sin unto death, or fall totally and finally, yet the falls of such as have been inlightned, God will be very angry withall, and correct them more sharply than other men. *Peter wept bitterly*, and *David* sat welladaying a long time before he received comfort, and many such have gone mourning and drooping to their graves. Hitherto of the Apostles *Exhortations*

Now of his Reasons to inforce it, which are three.

1. Taken from the great loss that will ensue, if we hearken unto such, *We shall lose the things that we have done.*
2. Taken from the *great Reward* that in the end should be given unto them if they continue and abide constant in the faith to the end, *We shall receive a full Reward.*
3. Taken from the great danger they shall bring themselves into, that do not abide constant in the faith of Jesus Christ, v. 9. *Whosoever transgresseth and abideth not in the Doctrine of Christ, hath not God; He that continueth in the Doctrine of Christ, hath the Father and the Son.*

Reas. 1. The first reason is taken from the great loss that will ensue if we hearken unto these *Seducers*, *We shall lose the things that we have done*; which words may be taken two wayes.

1. Of Saint *John*, and the rest of the Ministers of Christ who had bestowed much labour and pains in Preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ unto this *Lady* and

and her *Children*, whose labours should now be lost, if they should fall away.

2. Or else of this *Lady* and her *Children* that they should lose the fruit and benefit of their good beginning, and all that good heretofore done by them.

If we take the words in the first sence, of Saint *John* and the rest of the Ministers of Christ, that hereby they should lose all their pains taken with them in the Gospel, the Instruction will be this, that

Doct. There can be no greater grief to a faithfull Minister than to see his pains and labours neglected of his people, and not to take that effect he desireth; this is the thing that striketh a godly Minister to the heart. And hence is it, that the Apostle exhorteth to obedience to their Doctrine, and useth this Argument, that they may give accompt to God *with joy and not with grief*; there is the greatest grief to his Soul, to think that all that he doth in the work of his Ministry is labour in vain, and as water spilt on the ground; this was it that caused the Prophet *Esay* to complain out of grief of heart, *I have laboured in vain, and spent my strength in vain*, and, *who hath believed our report, and to whom hath the arm of the Lord been revealed?* And thus complaineth the Prophet *Jeremy*, *We would have cured Babel, but she would not be cured*; and was not this the case of our Saviour himself? 1. What a sad complaint takes he up over *Jerusalem*? *O that thou hadst known in this thy dayes the things that belong unto thy peace, but now they are hid from thy eyes*, And again, *O Jerusalem Jerusalem, Thou that killest the Prophets*, &c. *how often would I have gathered thee as a Hen her Chickens under her wings; but thou wouldst not?* and how much our Saviour was affected with their obstinacy and hardness of heart appeareth by his *weeping* over that City; and often do the Apostles complain in their Epistles to the Churches, that the Gospel was not more effectual amongst them, as their greatest grief.

It is a great grief to a godly Minister when his Ministry works not. Heb. 13. 17.

Esay. 49. 4.

Luke 19.

Mat. 23.

And

Reas. 1. And it must needs be a grief to a faithfull Minister, to labour in vain, and to spend his strength in vain, because it is the end of their Ministry function and calling, not to feed themselves, fill their Purses, or grow Rich in the World; but to inlarge Christs Kingdome; and this Seal of his the Lord doth usually set to the Ministry of his servant sent by him.

2. Secondly, because it is a comfortable evidence that such are true Ministers of Christ, Pastors to feed, and not *Wolves* to devour, that make this the end of their Ministry, to benefit the Souls of their people, and that make it their griefe when their Ministry is not effectual.

Use 1. Seeing then it is such cause of grief to a faithfull Minister to see his labours thus unprofitable with his people, this may notwithstanding comfort and incourage the Ministers of Christ against all the discomforts they meet withall.

1. That the discomforts that we meet withall are nothing to that which the Prophets and Disciples of Christ met withall.

2. If our consciences can witness with us that we are faithfull in our calling, and carefull to imploy the Talent we have received to our Masters profit, our reward is with the Lord: *though Israel be not gathered* Esay 49. 4, 5. *yet shall I* (saith the Prophet) *be glorious in the eyes of the Lord, and my God shall be my strength.*

Christ himself that was the word of life, and spake as never man spake, yet could do no great works amongst some people, *because of their unbelief*; God sometimes sends his Word to a place and people for their further hardning, and that they might be left without all excuse in the searching day of Gods account, and yet the Minister is faithfull and shall have his reward.

2. Secondly, let all such stiffnecked and stubborn people as neglect, and lightly regard the labours and pains of their faithfull Pastors, take heed to themselves, for doubtless

doubtless such shall not escape the revengefull hand of God; the old World that so lightly regarded *Noahs* Preaching, God did provide for him and his, when the graceless World perished; And Christ denounced a *Wo* against *Corazin* and *Bethsaidah*, that had the means of salvation afforded unto them, and tells them that it should be *easier* for *Sodom* and *Gomorrah* in the day of Judgment than for them. Certainly, there shall be many people, and many Congregations that one day shall cry out and say, O that I had been born a *Sodomite*, or one of *Gomorrah*, whose Judgment shall not be like to many that live amongst us, in these times of the Gospel.

But now if we take these words, *That we lose not the things that we have done*, in the other sense; to be meant of this *Lady* and her *Children*, then the Instruction will be this.

That they that have once begun to imbrace the Truth and Faith of Christ, must resolve with themselves to be constant therein. It is constancy in the truth, that is a sign a man hath received the truth in the love of it; and indeed this doth shew the main difference betwixt the obedience of the regenerate, and the unregenerate; An unregenerate man and such a one as shall never be saved by Christ, may seem to set out well, and take a step or two in the way of holiness, *Demas* did so, *Hymineus* and *Philetus* did so, as others followed Christ, so did they, so did those Hearers compared to the stony ground, and thorny ground, these went well on for a time, but did not persevere in well doing, but gave out, fell off, and in the end fell away. But this perseverance in well-doing must be to the end, it must at no time be *lost*, *that we lose not the things that we have done*; and this onely hath the promise of the Crown annexed unto it, *Be thou faithfull unto Death, and I will give thee the crown of Life*, and by patience in well-doing continue. It is no vertue to begin; but it is perseverance that hath the promise, *Abide in me*, saith Christ

Doct. Perseverance required in such as profess the truth.

Rev. 2. 10.

Christ. It is not enough to *come unto Christ*, unless we *abide* with Christ. Let him that is holy, be holy still;
Rev. 22. 11. and, *Hold fast that thou hast till I come*; and, *Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee the crown of life*:
Rev. 2. 25. and, *He that continueth unto the end, the same shall be*
Rev. 2. 10. *saved*. The foolish Virgins had their lamps of outward profession, they went out with the wise, to meet the Bridegroom; but whilst the Bridegroom tarried, they slumbred and slept; whereas the wise Virgins that were furnished with *oyl* in their lamps, entred with the *Bridegroom* into the marriage chamber. Perseverance in well doing, crowns all our actions.

Reas. 1. And the Reasons are,

First, Because the grace of *Sanctification* is a continual act, and proceeding in grace, and is nothing else indeed but a return to our first estate and image, to the which we cannot attain till death, when our Sanctification shall be perfected, till then we be but in the way, our last enemy that is to be destroyed, being Death.

2. Secondly, The Saints must make this *progress* in the ways of godliness, because perseverance is a gift never separate from saving Faith, truth of grace being ever crowned with perseverance: and that in three respects.

Esa. 40. 31. 1. In respect of the promise, which is, *That they that wait on the Lord, shall renew their strength as the Eagle, they shall run, and not be weary, they shall walk, and not be faint.* Here is Gods promise.

Ioh. 7. 37. 2. In respect of Faith, the nature whereof, as it apprehendeth Christ to be that living water, of which whosoever drinketh, shall never thirst again; so finds that fulness in Christ, that gives full satisfaction and contentment to the soul.

Psal. 1. 3. 3. In respect of the faithful themselves, who are as *trees* planted by the rivers of waters, *whose leaves shall never fall.* These are those good ground, *that bring forth fruit through patience*; when the best fruit

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Hypocrites and Temporizers at last shall come to nothing.

But do we not see, that many, even of those that have made a very fair shew of Religion, yet have declined, and fallen back; and have not walked on so steadily and constantly in their holy profession? *Object.*

I answer: This is often found too true, even amongst the godly themselves, that they have their wains, and declinings in grace; which thing so comes to pass, partly by the malice and temptation of Sathan, who especially assaulteth this grace of a Christians perseverance: for certain it is, that Sathan is not so great an enemy to hinder any man from profession of Religion, or entring into the way of godliness, as he is to his persevering in that way; for Sathan knows well, that the Judgment of such will be so much the heavier at last. Besides, this thing sometimes happens to the godly through weakness, and want of watchfulness, and often when they presume on their own strength, as *Peter* did. *Answ.*

But now for wicked men that thus apostatize, and fall away, it is no marvel at all, for such have no promise or assurance to stand.

As there are many *Meteors* in the air, so there are many *Meteors* in the Church; that howsoever they seem to shine, and make a blaze for a time, yet fall at last, and end with a stink. We need not go far for Examples, we have them at our next doors, whose garments are fallen off, and their nakedness doth appear.

3. But yet we have one Argument or Reason more, to inforce the perseverance of the Saints, that they fall not off, nor *lose the things that they have done*; and that may be taken from the misery and punishment such bring upon themselves, that thus fall away: for if we either prove faint-hearted, or faithless; if it be said of us, as *Paul* said of the *Galatians*, *Ye did run well, what did let you that ye did not obtain?* our later Gal. 5. 7.

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end shall be worse than the beginning: for so saith Christ, *When the Devil is once cast out of a man, &c. He bringeth seven spirits, and they enter in, and dwell there, so the last state of this man is worse than the first.*

Luk. 11. 26.

Worse; divers wayes.

1. Sathan will hold such a one faster than before; like a Jaylor, if his prisoner make an escape, if he get him in again, will clap his heaviest fetters upon him, even his *Lady Liggions*, that he shall no more escape.

2. God for his part, will not be so easily intreated, to shew him the like favour again, in pulling him out of the snares of Sathan as before.

3. The hearts of these men become hardned, and they most obstinate, that they be not easily wrought upon, but falling away from *their first love* and zeal they had to Religion, and Gods servants, to embrace delusions of Sathan, and to lay aside the light of the holy Scriptures, and to follow a light within, and a spirit within, contrary to the mind of the Spirit revealed in the Word. This the Apostle calls, *The working of Sathan amongst them that perish.* A manifest token of Gods Judgement upon such.

2 Thes. 2. 9, 10.

And now for the uses of this point. First, in general; and then more particular.

Use 1. The first is for the reproof of our Land, and Nation in general. Time was, in the beginning of the Reformation of the Church, and Religion amongst us, that our fore-fathers received it in love, joy, zeal, diligence, and great affection; But alas! who doth not see that we are of the losing hand *of those things that we have done*? Doth not Religion become a matter of meer formality amongst us? Time was when *England* hasted out of Popery, as fast as the people of Israel hasted out of *Egypt*; O how joyful were the feet of those that brought tidings of peace, and good things unto us! *Then was the Church edified, and grew*

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in knowledg, and grace, and in the comforts of the Holy Ghost. But what do we now? How many are looking back again to the *Egypt* of *Popery* and *Superstition*, or worse, to imbrace every strange sect, or opinion, begotten in these times of licentiousness, and liberty of Conscience, so much pleaded for? which are grown to that head, that, like the sons of *Zervia*, are almost too strong for us.

When was that age wherein sin did more abound? the form of godliness is held enough, though without the power of godliness. When was there more erection of those Heathenish May-poles (notwithstanding his Majesties Royal pleasure signified to the contrary) than now amongst us? When more blasphemous oaths? When did that common, and National sin of Drunkenness more abound? When the Ministers of Christ more slighted? and other abominations more rife and common, risen fifteen cubits higher than ever? Whence I say, are all these, but from our Apostacy from God? and, that *we have lost the things that we have done*? And what can be expected, but that God at last will visit for these things, and be avenged on such a Nation as this is?

In particular, This may make such ashamed, that 2.
fall away from their *stedfastness* Our Saviour declares
such unmeet for the Kingdom of Heaven: *No man* Luk. 9.
that puts his hand to the plow, and looketh back, is meet 62.
for the kingdom of heaven. What a strange creature is an *Apostate*? a *Mare-maid*, as one calls him, half flesh, half fish; a Christian in the morning of his life, and quite withered before the evening of his day; one in whom the Proverb is verified, *A young Saint, and an old Devil.* Wo to Sathan for his malice, and wo to such for their backsliding; sad shall the account of such be, when they shall appear before God in a backsliding condition.

Thirdly, this may serve for our *Instruction*, that as 3.
we desire to have the comfort and assurance of the

truth of grace in our hearts, so to labour to hold out, and to persevere in grace; since that Hypocrites and wicked men may begin well, only true grace ends well. O how often are we pressed to hold on, and to persevere in grace? *Stand fast in the faith.* And again, *Therefore brethren stand fast*; and, *Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering*; and, *Remember what thou hast received and heard, and hold fast.* And never more need for Ministers than in these dayes, to press our people hard upon this duty.

1 Cor. 16. 13. 2 Thes. 2. 15. Heb. 10. 23. Rev. 3 3.

Hitherto of the first Reason, to press us to *look to our selves*, taken from the loss that will ensue on the neglect thereof, *We shall lose the things that we have done.*

2 Reason.

The second Reason is taken from the great *Reward*, that in the end, shall be given unto them, if they continue and abide constant in the faith to the end; *We shall receive a full reward.*

Here we have the *Apostles* second Reason, to inforce his former *Exhortation*; and this Reason is drawn from the great and plentifull *reward*, that in the end shall be given unto all those that abide constant in the faith of the Gospel, *They shall receive a full reward*, i. e. a full, and plentiful *reward*, at the hands of God.

Doct. Christians in doing of duties may have an eye to the reward. Mat. 5. Rev. 2. 10.

Hence we may observe, That Gods people, in doing their duty for God, may incourage themselves with this, they shall have a *reward*; and this reward may and ought the Saints to have an eye unto, in all their works they do for God. Thus Christ encourageth his Disciples, both to do, and to suffer for his name, *for great is your reward in heaven.* And to the Church of *Smyrna*, Christ gives this comfort against their *tribulation*, and *poverty* that they suffered, *Be thou faithful unto the death, and I will give thee the crown of life.* And thus *Moses* was encouraged, against

Heb. 11. the manifold troubles he met withall; *He had an eye to the recompence of reward.* And the godly are said to

seek

seek for immortality and glory; and, *We rejoyce under the hope of the glory of God*: so that whatsoever temptations and discouragements we may meet withall, in doing our duty, and work of the Lord, this *reward* will abundantly make amends for all. It is said of Christ himself, *That for the joy that was set before him, he endured the cross, and despised the shame.* And so, may we have an eye to the joy that is set before us, to make us hold out, and to go through thick and thin, through all the crosses, temptations, miseries and afflictions, which we must look to undergo in running our Christian race. Rom 5 2. Heb. 12. 2

And what was the reason those primitive Christians *suffered with joy the spoiling of their goods*? a very hard thing to flesh and blood: the reason is there added, *They knew that in Heaven they had a better, and more durable substance.* Heb. 10. 37.

This serves for matter of singular comfort, and consolation unto the godly, for it is a temptation wherewith the hearts of Gods people are sometimes cumbred, to think it a vain and unprofitable thing to serve the Lord. *Ob* tells us of some that thought thus, *What profit should we have, if we pray unto God?* And the Prophet *Malachy* brings in those wicked *Jewes*, speaking thus; *Ye have said it is in vain to serve the Lord, and what profit is there that we have kept his commandments, and that we have walked humbly before the Lord?* And *David* himself was not a little troubled at this, to behold the prosperity of the wicked. Certainly, saith he, *I have cleansed my heart in vain, &c.* *Use* 1. Iob 21.15. Mal.3.14. Psal.73. 13.

The like thoughts arise, though not at all times, yet at sometimes in the hearts of the godly

1. When a man hath spent a long time of his life in the service of God, and then comes to suffer want, endure long sickness, crosses, losses, & much affliction, then is Sathan ready to suggest, and this man to think with himself, Now I perceive that all my labour in the service of God is in vain, and what good have I got hereby?

2. When again he looks about him, and there seeth the wicked of the World who live in continual rebellion against God, how they flourish and prosper, then such thoughts are ready to rise in their hearts as these.

But now Christian so oft as thou art cumbred with these or the like temptations, take heed thou be not dismai'd or discouraged, but look up to this *Reward* in the end, comfort thy self in this, that although thou dost not yet find it, yet there is a *Reward for the Righteous, there is a God that judgeth the earth.*

And farther to stay us in these times of these or the like temptations, it shall be our wisdom to consider,

Luk. 18. 7. 1. That the Lord is patient, *and suffereth long the vessels of wrath*, yet will be sure at last to avenge his Elect.

2. The iniquity of the wicked is not by and by full ripe for Judgment; but that the wicked may prevail, and his Church and people may suffer, as if *Baal* or *Asteroth* ruled the World.

3. The Lord permits the Wicked thus to prosper for a time, and his Church and people to be brought full low, for his own glory, when the Lord shall appear in the just confusion of the one and deliverance of the other; when *Hamans* Pride and Malice was at the height, and *Hesters* and her peoples destruction at the door, then is the time for God to manifest his own glory in the destruction of *Haman*, and Salvation of the *Jewes.*

Heft. 9.

2. Secondly, this may serve to inform us how wee may stand fast in evill times, and approaching dangers, and the miseries of this present life; if we would hold up our heads in such times as these, let us take out this lesson, to cast our *Anchor* of hope in Heaven. O did we but see what a harvest of glory the Saints shall reap after this life, how willingly would they indure the sweat of the Seed time here? none payeth better wages than God doth, and wise men will prefer a good Inheritance

heritance in reversion, before a trifle in possession; and if we should here injoy our hearts desire without affliction, Heaven would not be so welcome unto us.

And last of all, as the servants of God may expect their *Reward* in Heaven that have done Gods work on earth, So this Doctrine brings tidings of *Woe*, to all wicked men, such as in their life time have been exercised in the work of darkness; what can these expect but at last they should be turned over to the prince of Darkness, when in the hour of death, thy own conscience shall tell thee, Sathan I have served, and whom else should pay me my wages? 3.

But what is this the Apostle saith, *Ye shall receive a full reward*, may it not seem here that a man by his constancy, in the faith of Christ, may merit Heaven and Salvation at Gods hand? *Quest.*

It followeth not, because God in mercy rewardeth our constancy and faithfulness in his service, that we may thereby merit Heaven as our *Reward* for so doing. *Answ.*

For this we must know, that a *Reward* may be alowed unto a man two wayes, 1. By his own desert, 2. By the promise of another.

1. There is a *Reward* due unto a man by right and *Debt*, or because he first deserved it; but thus can we not look for any thing at Gods hand, for God is Debter to no man. 1.

For the work that meriteth and deserveth a *Reward*, it must have in it these three properties.

1. It must be of our selves, and from our selves; but who is able thus to do good, *Since it is God that worketh in us to will, and to do*, and Christ saith, *without me you can do nothing*?

2. The good we do must be voluntary of our own good will, not of duty; but we are all the Lords bond-servants, and when we have done all that we can, we are unprofitable servants.

3. The good we do must be answerable to the *Reward* that is received; but alass, can poor weak and frail men deserve the Kingdome of Heaven? No no, but as *Paul* saith, *The sufferings of this Life are not worthy of the Glory to be revealed.* Rom. 8. 18.

2. Secondly, there is a *Reward* due unto a man by the promise of another; and that is the great and glorious Reward in the Kingdome of Heaven, which the Lord hath promised all those that abide constant in the faith of Christ to the end; *Be thou faithfull unto Death, and I will give thee a Crown of Life.* We cannot say that we deserve it, but onely from Gods free Grace and Promise.

Vers. 9.

Whosoever transgresseth and abideth not in the Doctrine of Christ hath not God: He that continueth in the Doctrine of Christ, he hath the Father and the Son.

3. *Reas.* HEre we have the Apostles third Reason, and that is taken from the great danger they shall bring upon themselves, if they do not abide constant in the faith of Christ, they shall thereby lose the love and favour of God, *Whosoever transgreseth and abideth not in the Doctrine of Christ hath not God.*

Whereas on the contrary if they continue constant and stedfast therein, they shall be sure to have God their *Father*, their *Friend*, and *God* the *Son* their *Mediator* and *Redeemer*, and so shall in the end be partakers of Eternal Life and Glory; *He that continueth in the Doctrine of Christ hath the Father and the Son.*

q. d. Can there possibly happen unto a man a greater loss and mischief than to be cast out of Gods favour, that God should renounce and cast him off as none of his, and the Son of God to dishonour him to be no Saviour of his? *But who so transgresseth and abideth not in the Doctrine of Christ,* he falls into this mischief,

chief, *He hath neither the Father nor the Son.*

But what meaneth the Apostle in saying, *That whosoever transgresseth and abideth not, &c. hath not God,* Where is it that God is not? And who is it whether Godly or Wicked, that hath not God alwayes present with him and by him? *Object.*

This is not meant in regard of his *presence*, for so God is present every where, *for God is not far off from any of us*, and, *do not I fill Heaven and Earth?* Neither is it meant in regard of his *Providence* which he extends to both good and bad, *He giveth rain and fruitfull seasons*, and, *causeth the Sun to shine upon good and bad.* *Answ.* Act. 17. 28. Jer. 23, 24.

But it is meant in respect of his gracious and favourable presence directing and protecting them, and thus none but the godly alone have God present with them; and in this sence it is that the faithfull in Scriptures are said to be the *houses* and *Temples* of God in the which he dwelleth, *Know ye not that your bodyes are the Temples of the holy Ghost?* And again, *ye are the Temples of the living God*; and in this sence the faithfull only are said to have God. So that whereas the Apostle saith, 1 Cor. 3. 16. 2 Cor. 6. 16.

Who so transgresseth and abideth not in the Doctrine of Christ hath not God,

His meaning is, that whosoeuer he is that hath once began to walk in the wayes of the Lord, and given up his name to Christ, and professed the Religion of the Gospel, and afterwards transgresseth, and wanders from the good way, hearkning to *seducers*, that he continueth not in the truth, Assuredly, as he forsaketh God, so God forsaketh him, *He hath not God*, not to be a *Father* or *Friend*, but is an enemy unto him, and will one day avenge himself upon him. Note hence,

That it is a misery of all misseries to be *without God.* *Doct.* It is a misery of all misery to be without God.

This truth will be made cleer in two particulars.

1. It is a great misery to be without the favour of God.
2. That it is a great misery to live without Communion with God.

First, this is a misery of all miseries to be out of Gods favour; *Thy loving countenance* (saith *David*) *is better than life it self*; then to be out of Gods favour must needs be worse than death. It is the presence and favour of God that makes Heaven, Heaven, and it is the want of Gods favour that makes Hell to be Hell. If a man were in Hell and had Gods favourable presence with him there, Hell would be no hell to him, and if a man had got to the Pinacle of all temporal happiness and felicity, without the favour of God, he were but a cursed miserable creature, and is sure from thence to be thrown down at last into the pit of endless misery. It is we know a misery to be without the common favours of God, as health, peace, liberty, the use of the creature, &c. much more to be without his special favour. See *David* when God did but a little hide his comfortable presence from him, *Thou didst hide thy face, and I was sore troubled.* O what a hellish life do they then live, that live without the favour of God? what though they have the favour of men, if they want this favour of God, they must needs be most miserable at last.

Psal. 63. 3.

Psal. 13. 7.

2. Secondly, such as are *Without God*, live without all communion with God. It was the misery of *Adam* after his fall, to be deprived of communion with God; and this is the misery of all wicked and unregenerate men that are not reconciled to God by Jesus Christ, these live *without God in the World*, and so have no communion and fellowship with him in his worship and service; these may call God *Father*, and rush into his Courts, but they come not into his presence, *They walk in darkness, and can have no Communion with him*; no not then when they give a kind of outside worship to God, yet they are far from having any communion with

with God, they do but offer to God the *halt*, the *lame* and the *blind*, they have no *male* in the flock for God, these hear *without God*, these *Pray without God*, *receive* the Sacrament *without God*. *Nadab* and *Abihu* in Sacrificing were destroyed with strange fire, and the *Corinthians* in coming to the Sacrament were cut off by death.

So then it is the greatest misery in the World to be thus cut off from God, to be deprived of his gracious presence, and from communion with him. *David* accounted it so, *I am become like a Pelican in the Wilderness*. *Jonas* accounted it so, *I am cast off from thy presence*. What is it but the very suburbs of Hell, thus to be *without God*? And what is Hell but a living for ever *without God* in the World to come, *They shall be punished with everlasting perdition from the presence of the Lord, and glory of his Power*. Wicked men care not for Gods presence here, and they shall for ever be cast out of his presence hereafter. Ion. 2. 2 Thes. 1.

But the Reasons will make this more cleer and plain.

First, because God is the chiefest good and happiness of the Soul; and if it be so, then it must be the greatest misery to be without him. But the first is true, *Who will shew us any good? Lord lift thou up the light of thy countenance, &c.* it is only Gods favour and countenance that gives life and satisfaction to the Soul; it is God alone that can free a man from that that makes him miserable, sin and the curse; and 'tis God alone can bestow upon a man that which makes him truly happy, *grace and glory*. *Reas.* 1.

Secondly, because without God we are without the benefit and comfort of all his attributes; such only as have God for their God, his *power* is theirs, his *wisdome* theirs, his *mercy* theirs, his *omniscience* theirs, *&c.* his *power* to protect them, his *mercy* to save them, his *wisdome* to direct them, and his *omniscience* to provide for them. But now thou that art *without God*, what com- 2.

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comfort canst thou have in any of these Attributes of his?

Thou hearest the Lord proclamed, *The Lord, the Lord, gracious and mercifull, forgiving iniquity, &c.* but what is this to thee, that art *without God*? God is a blessed God, but thou art *without God*, therefore thou art cursed; God is a *strong* and a *powerfull* God, but thou art *without God*, therefore his *power* shall not be *reached* out to save thee, but to destroy thee. God is an *Omnipresent* God, but what good will the consideration thereof do thee, seeing he must needs see all thy sinns?

3. Thirdly, they that are thus *without God*, they live such a life as the damned in hell live, for this is their misery there, to live for ever without God; and as they live without God in this world, so they shall live for ever without God in the World to come. The only way to live with God for ever hereafter, is to live with God here.

use. 1. Is it such a misery to be *without God*? then here is matter of *Instruction* to the people of God, to be thankfull if they are not *without God* as the World is, that 1 John 5. *lyeth in Wickedness*. So to be humbled for this, that we are no more with God, walk no more with him, as *Noah* and *Enoch* did, that we have so little of God, in Knowledge of him, in Communion with him, the very best have cause to be humbled that we are so much without God as we are.

2. For though we have God, yet look how far we come short in glorifying him as God, so far we are without him.

3. So far as we profess our selves his Children and Servants, yet give him not that Honour, Reverence and Mal. 1. 6. Service that he requires, so far we are without God.

If we glorifie him not Primarily and in the first place, but look first at our selves in the first place, and at Gods glory in the next; when we consult with flesh and blood in the first place, As *Asa* that sought first

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to the Physician; resting upon the means in the first place, and upon God when means fail, so far we are without God.

When we shall seem to rest upon God, in times of lesser tryals and afflictions, and fly from God to *Witches, Wizards*, or the like, in time of sharper trials, Thus far are we without God. The Lord is with us whilst we are with him, but if we forsake God he will forsake us, and then wo to us if God depart from us. 4.

Secondly, this shews the misery of all wicked and ungodly men that are without God in the World, these shall find what a misery this is one day to be *without God*, as *Cain* did when he had murthered his brother, and God had forsaken him, *My punishment* (saith he) *is greater than I can bear*, he went up and down without God in the World, his Conscience ever flying in his face. If *Cain* had lived in our dayes, every man would have pitied him to see him go up and down, with a pale countenance looking you in the face and speaking not a word, as some with a *Cains* countenance do amongst us. Alas poor *Cain*! Alas poor *Cain* would men say, *without God*, without the Protection of God, without the favour of God, hated of God. 2.

O this is the case of every wicked man, these go up and down *without God*, poor Drunkerds, *without God*, though perhaps not without wealth in the World, nor credit in the World, *yet without God in the World*. O that all ungodly men would but consider that dreadfull place, *They have turned their backs upon me, and not their faces, but in the time of their trouble they will say, arise and save us.* But will God save them then? No, no, See what follows in that place? *Where are thy Gods that thou hast made thee? let them arise if they can save thee, When thou cryest let thy Companions deliver thee.* So hopeless, and helpless, will the condition of all wicked men be at last. Ier. 2. 27. vers. 28.

And last of all, is it such a misery to be *without God*? then

then this may serve for matter of *consolation* unto the Children of God; know, O know, that though thou maist seem miserable in respect of thy wants of outward things, yea all things, yet so long as thou art not *without God* thou canst not be miserable. Enemies, Tyrants, Death, Devils, cannot make that Soul miserable that hath God for his God.

As they that enjoy all other things, without God, cannot be happy; so they that want all things, so they enjoy God, cannot be miserable. Be it thou art poor, yet not *without God*; this is a rich portion.

O but I am sinful, and compassed about with many infirmities. *Answ.* Be not out of heart, so long as thou hast God. *He pardoneth iniquities, transgressions and sins. Who is a god like our God?* It is all one to be out of debt, as to have one to pay our debts for us. What though thou be full of weaknesses? yet thou hast a strong God, able to strengthen thee. I have no wisdom sayest thou, but I have a God that is *only wise*, a *merciful God*, able to save to the utmost. What? without friends? yet not without God: and amongst friends, who is like to God? What said *Jacob* to his discontented wife? *Am I not better than ten sons?* so say thou, *God is my portion for ever.*

He that continueth in the Doctrine of Christ, hath both the Father and the Son.

AS in the former words the Apostle sheweth how unspeakable miserable the estate of that man is, who transgresseth, and abideth not in the Doctrine of Christ, *He hath not God*;

So in these words, on the contrary, he sheweth how unspeakable *blessed* and *happy* that man is, that doth stedfastly abide, hold fast, and continue in the truth, and persevere in the Doctrine of Christ unto the end; *He hath the Father and the Son*: q. d. he hath both God the Father a Father unto him, and God the Son

Son a Saviour unto him, and a Mediatour to God the Father for him.

Now howsoever the Apostle mentioneth but the *Father* and the *Son*, as favourers of the constant Christian persevering in the truth; yet is not the Holy Ghost hereby excluded, as if he had no work in the Christians perseverance, or affection at all towards him: For God the Father, and the Son, do dwell in the heart of the faithful, by the Holy Ghost, as the Scripture testifieth; *If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, the same is none of his.* And again, *Know ye not, that ye are the Temples of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?* so that he that continueth constant in the truth, and faith of the Gospel, hath the *love* and *favour* of the whole Trinity. So that the Doctrine hence is, that

Rom 8. 9. 1 Cor. 3. 16.

Doct. The constant Christian hath the love of God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

The constant Christian, that is not drawn away by *Seducers*, to fall from the faith in Christ, and Doctrine of the Gospel, but continues faithful, and constant in the same, this believing soul hath the favour and love of God, both Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. There is a mutual love, and friendship, between God and them: these God vouchsafeth to look upon as friends, and so to stile them. Thus *Abraham* is stiled *the friend of God.* And so Christ looks upon his Disciples, *Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you.* And, *Henceforth call I you not servants, but friends.* And hence is it, that all the faithful, all true believers, are called the Temples of the Holy Ghost, and God hath said, *I will dwell in them, and walk in them. Ye are the Temples of the living God, and if any man defile the Temple of God, him will God destroy; which Temple of God are ye.*

Iam. 2. 23. Ioh. 15. 14, 15. 2 Cor. 6. 16.

What nearer union, or communion, can there be, betwixt God and a Believer, than for God to cohabitate with such? Now all true Believers are Gods habitation, the Lord dwells with them, and in them. The Lord hath two *Thrones*, one in the *Emperial Hea-*

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ven, the other in the *hearts* of his *Children*; the Lord dwelleth in the highest Heavens, and in the lowest hearts: now Gods children, of all others, have the lowest hearts, and such are the meetest habitation for God to dwell in.

Now whereas the Apostle saith, *He that continueth in the Doctrine of Christ, hath both the Father and the Son*, to be in them, to abide with them, to guide, direct, and protect them, all which their presence implyes; This love of his to the Believer, brings with it many excellent *priviledges* and *prerogatives*: as,

1. It implies *Familiarity*, and communion betwixt God and his Children. Can two live together in a family, without familiarity? this cannot God and the Believer do: God doth communicate and reveal himself and his secrets unto such; *The secrets of the Lord are amongst them that fear him, and he will shew them his Covenant.* The mysteries of life and salvation, are hid from the wise, and prudent of the world, yet are revealed unto them; *Shall I hide from Abraham the things that I do?* Gods children know more of Gods secrets, than all the seeming wise men of the world besides: they have fellowship with the Father and the Son.

Psal. 25. 14. Mat. 11. 25.

2. It implies *Propriety*, that the Lord hath a propriety in them; as a man hath in his house he dwelleth in, he can say, this is my house; so the Lord saith of his children, *They are mine*, and here will I dwell; *I will be their God, and they shall be my people.* They are not the worlds, for the world hates them, and loves her own; but the Lord owns them; these have a propriety in God, and God in them.

Mal. 3 13. 2 Cor. 6. 16.

3. It implies, that God is graciously *present* with his children, to protect them, to comfort them, as a man is present in his house, to keep it and protect it; so is the Lord graciously present in his Church, and amongst his people; *Fear not, Worm Jacob, I am with thee, when thou passest through fire and water, I will be with thee.*

Esa. 43. 2, 3.

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He keeps them as the *Apple of his eye*, nothing shall hurt his habitation.

4. It implies *rest*, in his house where he dwells, so the Lord finds rest and content in his children; *The Lord hath chosen Zion, and loved to dwell in it, saying, this is my rest for ever, here will I dwell, for I have a delight therein.* The Lord finds no rest in the habitations of the wicked.

5. It implyes *Residence* and *continuance*, for the Lord never departs from such, he never leaves them, but abides with them for ever; He is not like a guest that lodgeth for a night in an Inn, and departeth in the morning; but as an Owner and Possessor that abideth for ever, *I will never fail thee nor forsake thee.*

6. It implyes *Regiment* and *Government*, as a man will be master in his own house, take the keyes of all, command all, So the Lord governeth all the faithfull, inlightning them with the knowledge of his will, acquaints them with his Laws for government, and by his Spirit works powerfully in the hearts of his Children and servants to obey his commands.

And there are Arguments and Reasons that farther cleer this truth, that God will Crown his Servants that constantly cleave to him with his gracious presence with such.

First, because of his own promise made to such as love God and keep his Commandements, *If any man love me and keep my words, my Father will love him, and we will come unto him and make our abod with him.* A gracious Soul is content that God shall have the best room in their house, even their hearts, they will give no entertainment to any other guest that shall offend him, as vain thoughts, or sinfull lusts or affections; but keep all clean, that God may delight to dwell there.

Secondly, the Lord hath purchased Believers to be his house and habitation, Christ by Redeeming us hath taken all the title Sathan had to us, so that he cannot challenge us to be his; yea the Lord Jesus *is that Strong*

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man Armed, &c. that hath taken Believers for his own, so that Sathan is dispossessed and cast out; we were Captives at his will untill Jesus Christ set us at liberty, and since the *Son* hath made us free, we are free indeed to serve him.

use. 1. Seeing all the faithfull *have the Father and the Son*, and are now Gods peculiar people, an habitation for himself to dwell in; in what condition then are those in, that *are without God in the World*, that are strangers to God, and God a stranger to them, that have no Communion at all with God, whose bodyes instead of being Temples for the Holy ghost to dwell in, are the habitation of wicked and unclean Spirits, a Cage for all sinfull and unclean lusts, drunkenness, uncleanness, pride, covetousness: thus are their bodyes swept and garnished, *Babylon like* a fit habitation for Devils to dwell in, and not for God. There must be no inmate where God dwels, he never lodgeth in that Soul where sinfull lusts and affections rule.

Eph. 2. 12.

2. And this leads us to the second Use which is for *Tryal* and *Examination* whether God dwell within us, and have his habitation in us yea or no; or whether Sathan abide there.

1. We may know who dwells within by the Servants that come in and out dayly of the doors. Would you know who dwells within the house of the Soul, see what comes from within? What, do vain and unchaste and malitious thoughts, blasphemous words and oaths, rotten speeches, eyes full of adultery, ears open to all wickedness? Who dwels here? God? no but the Devil dwels here; is God served with such servants and attendants as these? such a Soul is a Cage for *Sathan*, and not for *God*.

But from the heart where God dwels proceed *Prayer, Sighs, Groans, Savoury Speeches* that tend to Edification, and the members of the body are ready prest as so many servants of Righteousness to serve him.

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2. Where God is and dwells, there he *Rules*, and frames that Soul to himself, he takes the keyes of the house, and rules all; He transformes such into his own likeness, he makes us holy as God is holy; Whereſoever God enters, he changeth the whole man outward and inward, he rules the *eyes*, he rules the *ears*, he rules the *tongue*, he renews all, gives to the Soul where he is, new desires, new joy, new hope, old things are here gone, and all things are become New, hereby you may know whether God have his habitation in you yea or no.

But what if we have not the *Father nor the Son*, God nor Christ to dwell in us? *Queſt.*

If God dwell not in us, the Devil doth, the Soul of man is such a habitation as never stands void, *Know ye not that Christ dwelleth in you except ye be Reprobate.* *Anſw.*

Anatomize a wicked man, and see what a wretched Creature he is.

His brain is stuft with plots and devices of the world and wickedness.

His heart is stuft with hypocrisie and deceit.

His Conscience seared, till Death and Judgment come, and then it will stare him in the face, and dam him without repentance.

Then shall the Sinner see and know what it is to be without *God and christ*, that now make light of both.

Is this so that Believers have the *Father* and the *Son* to Cohabitate and abide with them and in them? this let us see the high Honour and Dignity, the Rich and glorious Privileges of Gods Children; howsoever the World esteems of them, howsoever they have but a poor and mean outside, yet they have a glorious inside, *The Kings Daughter is all glorious within.* It may be thou livest in a poor smoaky thatcht Cottage, yet if thou seest a Believer, thou hast the *Father* and the *Son* abiding with thee; though thou seest thy self to be sinfull and unworthy; So did the *Centurion*, *Lord I am not worthy* 3.

thou shouldst enter under my roof, yet if thy heart be bro-
Esay 57. 15. ken and humbled, *the Lord dwells with him that is of a broken heart.* Consider *Christian* what a singular guest God is, where he is there is no want. Princes Courts are plentifully replenished with all good things, both for necessity and delight, much more is God in his provisions where he comes; and where he comes to inhabit, there he abides for ever.

Object. But alas saith the poor soul, I have sometimes felt much sweetness and comfort in Gods presence, my heart hath been full of joy, I have had inlargements in Prayer, and have had experience of his gratious presence: But this now is gone and past, and *fear and trembling have seazed upon me.*

Answ. All this may be, and yet thou abid'st in his favour and love; 'tis true, God doth sometimes seem to withdraw himself from the soul, and to *hide his face*, when he hath not due entertainment, nor wee respect his presence as we should, and when the comforts of his spirit are not fed and cherished, then it pleaseth the Lord to seem to desert his Children for a time, as if he had forsaken them and cast them off, but this the Lord may do in love and much mercy.

1. That hereby the Lord might take tryal of the graces of his servants which at such a time are set on work.
2. That hereby they might find out some sinn in them, that otherwise could not have been discovered.
3. That when we obtain reconciliation with God again, we should preserve the same more carefully.
4. The Lord hereby will keep our Prayers going, and have the better edge set upon them, which before were cold.
5. God may be pleased to suspend comfort and deliverance for a fitter time, when his Church and people can set a due price upon it.

As

And in the mean time God deals with his Children, as *Joseph* with his brethren, who deals very roughly with them, when his bowels were towards them. So doth God, his frowns are in mercy, and he doth but take day ever with his people, and reserves deliverance for the fittest time. Gen. 42. 9.

Thus we have heard the Apostles *Exhortation*, *Take heed to your selves that ye lose not the things that ye have done.*

As also the Reasons to inforce the *Exhortation*.

1. Taken from the great loss that will ensue if we hearken unto such, *We shall lose the things that we have done.*

2. Taken from the great *Reward* that in the end shall be given to them if they continue, *We shall receive a full Reward.*

3. Taken from the great danger they shall bring themselves into that do not abide constant, *Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the Doctrine of Christ, hath not God*, whereas he that continueth in the Doctrine of Christ *hath the Father and the Son.*

But here it will be objected. Alas, we see the World is full of these *Deceivers* in every corner, that are still at work, and many we see daily to hearken and follow after them; What course shall we take for our strengthning in the Faith, and Religion of Jesus Christ? *Object.*

1. Be diligent in *Hearing*, *Reading*, and *Meditating* upon the Word, that thou mayst be rooted and grounded in the Truth, this will keep a man from being shaken with every wind of Doctrine: for whom do these *Seducers* work upon but ungrounded Christians? and hereunto ad obedience in life according to that thou knowest; *If any man* (saith Christ) *will do his will, he shall know his Doctrine whether it be of God.* *Answ.* Directions to be preserved from errors. Joh. 7. 17.

2. As thou growest in the *Knowledge* of the Truth, so labour to grow in the *Love* and *Affection* unto it likewise;

wise; for the more thou lovest the truth, the greater will thy hatred be to error and falshood. So *David*, *I hate vain inventions, but thy Law do I love.*

Psal. 119. 113.

3. Be much in Prayer to God; for it is *He that must keep us from falling*; all our purposes and resolutions we take up will not do unless the Lord assist us.

Jud. 24.

4. Take heed of Heretical books which flye abroad so freely, which poyson many; and such as by reading such books, or holding society and familiarity with such, whose judgments are corrupt, do but tempt God and expose themselves to danger. A practice expresly forbidden by God, *Avoid them*, saith *Paul*, Rom. 16. 17. *Turn away from such*, 2 Tim. 3. 5, 6. *Because of such*, saith Christ, *Mat.* 7. 15. *Go not after them*, Luke. 21. 8. *If they come to you receive them not to house, nor bid them god speed*, as it followeth in the next verse; what warrant then have people to venture into their company, or frequent their meetings who declare themselves professed Enemyes to *God*, the *Scriptures*, *Christs Ordinances*, and the *Truth*?

5. Cleave fast to a godly and faithfull Ministry, God hath called these and gifted these *for the edification of the body of Christ*; and when do these deluded souls desert the truth, but when they desert the Ministry; and this is the very first Lesson seducers teach their Scholars and Proselytes, to cry down the godly teachers, to steal peoples hearts from them; and when the flock comes once to be divided from the *Shepheard*, how easily doth it become a prey?

Eph. 4. 12.

By the Conscionable use of these means thou shalt come to be established in the *Truth*, and have both *the Father and the Son*.

Verse

Verſ. 10, 11.

10. *If there come any unto you and bring not this Doctrine, receive him not to houſe, neither bid him God ſpeed.*

11. *For he that biddeth him God ſpeed is partaker of his evill deeds.*

IN theſe words we have the ſecond branch of the Apoſtle *Exhortation*, as to beware of their Doctrine, ſo to beware of their Perſons, the ſcope whereof is this,

That this *Lady* and her *children* ſhould take heed that they acquaint not themſelves with ſuch.

And whereas the effects of familiar acquaintance between men are theſe two;

1. To entertain one another into their houſes.
2. To ſalute one another when they meet.

The Apoſtle expreſly forbiddeth both theſe kinds of courteſies to be ſhewed towards ſuch, *He that is ſuch a one receive him not to houſe, &c.*

Such as are the Miniſters of Chriſt, and ſent of him, *their feet*, that is their coming and preſence, ought to be beautifull unto us; *How beautifull are the feet of thoſe that bring tydings of peace, &c.* ſuch as bring the ſincere Doctrine of the goſpel we are commanded to entertain them into our houſes, and to make much of them. *Verily, verily, I ſay unto you, if I ſend any, he that receiveth him receiveth me.*

Eſay 52.7. Rom. 10. Ioh. 13.20.

But as for ſuch *Deceivers* as theſe, ſee that *ye receive them not to houſe*, beware of them, have nothing to do with them, give them not the leaſt countenance, and let them have no entertainment at all amongſt you; Nay, if at any time you meet with ſuch by the way, do not ſo much as ſay *God ſpeed*, that is, ſalute him not.

And then he addeth the Reaſon, *verſ.* 11. *For he that biddeth*

biddeth him God speed, is partaker of his evill deed, q. d. if you hold communion with such, or shew any such familiarity to such, as to salute them, you make some shew to the World that you favour them in their Evill.

These words of the Apostle consist of two parts.

1. The Exhortation, *If there come any that bring not this Doctrine, receive, &c.*
2. The Reason, *For he that biddeth him God speed, &c.*

Doct. No familiarity to be held with Heretiques.

1. The *Exhortation*, *If there come any that bringeth not this Doctrine, &c.* The observation is,

That it is the duty of every faithfull and godly Christian, indeed, that would approve himself to God as such, to shun all manner of familiar acquaintance with *Heretiques*, and those whom we know to hold and maintain any points of Faith and Religion, contrary to the Doctrine and Religion of Jesus Christ, and who doth obstinately persist and persevere therein. Such our Saviour himself commandeth us to *avoid*, as Publicans and Wicked men, and it is the Apostles Exhortation, *Now I beseech you Brethren, mark them diligently which cause division and offences contrary to the Doctrine which ye have learned, and avoid them*, and, *let no man deceive you with vain words, &c. Be not companions with them*, and, *reject him that after once or twice admonition is an Heretique.*

Mat. 18. 17. Rom. 16. 17. Eph. 5. 6, 7 Tit. 3. 10.

1 Tim. 6. 5.

And the Apostle forbids *Timothy* to reason much with wrangling spirits, *perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth, from such withdraw thy self.* And if such a one as *Timothy* may not be alowed, much less may private Christians have ought to do with such.

And such was the judgment of the *Primitive Fathers* of the Church, *Augustine, Irenæus, &c.* in the very first Age after the Apostles, that Saint *John* Evangelist would

would not abide in the *Bath* where *Cerinthus* was, that was an *Heretique*. And it is related of *Policarp* Scholar to the said *John* Evangelist, that he meeting at *Rome* a certain Arch-heretick named *Marcion*, he would not so much as salute him, whereat *Marcion* being moved, asked him whether he did not know him? yea, saith *Policarp*, *I know thee to be the first begotten of Sathan*; and this practice of his is agreeable to his Doctrine in this Text, *Do not receive such to house, nor bid them God speed.*

Now the Reasons for this, why we must so carefully avoid all familiar society with such Wicked and ungodly persons are these.

First, that this wicked man, when he shall find himself thus shunned of all good Christians, as one of another society, may hereby be brought to see his error, and to be ashamed of himself, *If any man obey not our sayings, note him, and have no company with him*, Why so? *That he may be ashamed.* *Reas.* 1. 2 Thes. 3. 14.

Secondly, that we for our parts may not be thought to be maintainers, or countenancers of such persons, for when those that are looked upon to be godly and religious, shall familiarly converse with such persons that declare themselves enemyes to the truth, Our weak brethren that are not well setled and grounded in the truth, will be ready to take offence, as to think their opinions are not so dangerous and damnable as indeed they are, and by their example may they more easily be insnared; and for this cause the Apostle warneth Christians to take heed lest by any means you be an occasion of falling to them that are weak; *for if any see thee that hast knowledge sit at Table in the Idols Temple, shall not the Conscience of him that is weak be boldned to eat those things that are sacrificed to Idols? and through thy knowledge shall thy weak brother perish for whom Christ Dyed.* 2. 1 Cor. 8. 9

Thirdly, all familiarity with *Heretiques* is to be avoided, that both our selves and those that are about us 3.

may be free from the infection and hurt, which otherwise we are in danger to receive by our conversing with them. See how earnestly *Moses* presseth this upon the people of *Israel*, *Thou shalt make no covenant with them*, (meaning those Idolatrous Canaanites,) *neither shall they dwell in thy Land, lest they make thee sin against me.* And this is the Reason why the Apostle would have that incestuous person *Excommunicate* and thrust out of the Church, for saith he, *A little leaven soureth the whole lump.* And indeed we see by sad experience, that such as keep company and hold familiarity with *Quakers*, or where any such are suffered in a family, how they corrupt and infect a whole household of people, and where one wicked person is made the better by the company of those that are good, there are many good that in time have grown stark naught by conversing and holding familiarity with such bad ones.

Exod. 23. 32.
Exod. 34. 12.
1 Cor. 5, 6

4. And yet we have one argument more to perswade us to avoid the company and fellowship with *Seducers*, lest we being partakers with these in their sins, at last we come to partake with them in their punishment. This was the charge that *Moses* gave to the Children of *Israel*, when they joyned themselves to those rebels against God, even *Corah*, *Dathan*, and *Abiram*, *Depart I pray you from the Tents of these Wicked men, and touch nothing of theirs, lest ye partake in all their sinns.*

Numb. 16 26.

And from *Babylon* the Church of *Rome* are we admonished to *depart, go out of her, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her Plagues.* All these reasons are weighty, pressing us to avoid all familiarity with Heretiques and such as are Enemies to the Doctrine and Religion of Jesus Christ.

Rev. 18. 4.

And yet in this there are certain Cautions to be observed.

1. Regard is to be had to mens places of *Authority* and office, they bear these must of all Christians be acknowledged,

knowledged, and such obedience and reverence performed unto them, as of right belongeth unto them. For example, are they Magistrates and such as are in Authority over us? these must be obeyed and reverenced of us.

Let every soul be subject to the higher Powers; and so did Christ himself and his followers pay tribute to *Cæsar*, and willingly they obeyed even the Heathen Emperors. Rom. 13. 1

Neither must the Husband forsake the Wife, nor the Wife the Husband, because of contrary opinions; this is cleer by that of the Apostle,

If any Brother have a Wife that believeth not, if she be content to dwell with him, let him not forsake her: And the Woman that hath a Husband that believeth not, if he be content to dwell with her, let her not forsake him. 1 Cor. 7. 12, 13.

2. Even such as are thus *Enemyes* to the Faith of Christ, or Enemyes unto us, if they be in want and distress, are to be relieved of us, *If thy Enemy* (either an Enemy to thy Person or Religion,) *hunger, feed him, if he thirst give him drink.* Rom. 12. 20.

3. We must hold outward peace with such, so far forth as Religion is not hindred thereby, *As much as in you lyeth have peace with all men.*

4. It is not unlawfull to traffick with them, to sell to them, and to buy of them, for thus did the *Jewes* with the *Heathens* and Idolatrous Nations, *Abraham bought of the Hittites a piece of ground to bury his Dead in, &c.* Gen. 23. 4.

5. Though we are to forbear all familiar society with such sort of people that are Heretiques, and oppose the Doctrine of Jesus Christ, yet must we

1. Love them in the Lord.
2. Admonish them till they appear obstinate.
3. Pray to God for their conversion.
4. Upon their Repentance, receive them into fellowship again.

But this may seem to be more than the Apostle alloweth, *Object.*

loweth, for saith he, *He that is such a one bid him not God speed*, which seems a very streight charge; can any less courtesie of common *humanity* be shewed unto a man than this is? yet saith the Apostle, afford not this man so much.

Answ. It is no part of the Apostles meaning that Christians should in any sort shew themselves uncivil or inhuman towards any, for Religion doth not overthrow *Civility* and *Humanity*, but rather require it and establish it, for

1. A Christians carriage must be such even towards those that are *without*, and yet are Enemyes of God and his Religion, as that thereby he may rather gain them unto him, than set them farther from him. A Lesson our *Quakers* have not yet learned, who are tongue-tyed when others speak, making it a part of their *perfection* not to salute any but their own *tribe*, and that
1 Tim. 5. 14. many times with a Mum and no more. Let such consider and consult well these Scriptures, whether this be not an occasion to the godly to speak evill of them and their wayes, and whether this practice of theirs be consonant to the rule of our Saviour, who saith, *Let*
Mat. 5 16. *your light so shine before men that they may see your good works and glorifie your Father which is in Heaven.* And
Tit. 2. 7, 8. *Paul* gives this in charge to *Titus*, *That in all things he should shew himself an example of good works with uncorrupt Doctrine, with gravity, integrity, that he which withstandeth may be ashamed*, And again, *Have your conversation honest*, with whom? with their own party only? no not so, but even *amongst the Gentiles*, Heathens, and Idolaters, *That they which speak evill of you as evill doers, may by your good works which they shall see, glorifie God*; of this more in the last verse.

2. Good conscience and good manners well may, and indeed must go together in a Christian; it is only for the Reasons before specified that Saint *John* would not have us either to enter into any familiar acquaintance with such persons, or so courteously to salute as

we

we would our godly and Christian friends of the same faith and religion with us, but rather to look upon them as strangers.

Let us apply this.

This serves for the just reproof of a sort of people amongst us, such as presuming so much upon their own knowledge and strength, and that they are so setled in the truth, that they say, nothing is able to move them, and therefore dare venture to hear a *Mass*, and go to the *Quakers* meetings, as if they were out of all danger. Be they *Papists*, *Atheists*, *Anabaptists*, *Quakers*, friends of Christ or enemyes to Christ all is one to them, they can receive them into their *houses*, and go to their houses, and converse, and be as familiar with them as if they were brethren of the same faith with them. *Use* 1.

Are there not many such amongst us, that go under the name of *Protestants*, and would be so accompted, which make this their daily practice? whereas, if they were friends unto Christ and his truth, certainly they would detest and abhor all such familiarity with those they know to be enemyes to Christ. O how will these men answer it at last, who have so many warnings to the contrary? *Be not companions of such, avoid them, withdraw your selves from them, Receive them not to house, nor bid them God speed.* I would have these considerations seriously to be thought upon by these men. Eph. 5. Rom. 16.

1. How full of slight and cunning these *Deceivers* and *Seducers* are, they are full of *cunning craftiness*, as the Apostle speaketh, they will speak with more probability and shew of reason than thou art aware of, and perhaps art not well able to answer. Eph. 4. 14.

2. Consider that *Error* and *Heresies* are stiled by the Apostle, *works of the flesh*, and so are most agreeable to our fleshly nature, which upon all occasions we are given to suck in. Gal 5. 20.

3. Consider, that it is the Ministers duty especially to *Resist gain-sayers*: But of every private Christian God requireth it not, neither have they warrant (unless occasionally Tit. 1. 9.

casionally it falls in their way) to come into the company of such, it is but the tempting of God, and to expose themselves to danger.

4. Consider that thou hast just cause to fear, that by thy coming into the company of such, and thy presuming upon thy own strength, with thy turning thy back upon Gods command, who hath forbidden the contrary, that God will leave thee and give thee up *to strong delusions to believe lyes*, that thou maist perish.

2 Thes. 2. 11.

2. Secondly by the Rule of this Doctrine such are to be reproved, who professing themselves *Protestants*, and to hold the faith of Christ and of the Gospel, do contract Marriage either with Papists, Quakers or others that are of a contrary Religion. Is it like the Apostle should not permit such to be received to *house*, and yet permit them to be received into bed? this cannot be.

If no familiarity is to be held with such, then we are not to joyn with them in the nearest society, and that for these reasons.

Exod. 34. 16. Deut. 7. 3. 2 Cor. 6. 14.

1. It is against the commandment of God, who chargeth his people the *Israelites* that they should make no Marriages with the Idolatrous Canaanites; This was straightly injoyned in the time of the Law.

And for us under the Gospel, He chargeth in like manner, *Be not unequally yoaked with Infidels*, Implying, that when a true believer is yoaked and matched with one that is an unbeliever, or misbeliever, it is an unequal and un-meet match.

Gen. 24. 3.

And for this cause *Abraham* when he sent his servant to provide a wife for *Isaac* his Son, he made him swear unto him, that he should not take any daughter of *Canaan* for him.

Deut. 7. 3. 1 Reg. 11. 1, 2. 2 Reg. 8. 18.

2. When any such match is made there is great danger that the true believer may be seduced. This was the Lords own reason, *Thou shalt not make Marriages with them, for they will cause thy Son to turn away from me.* And how many Examples have we in the Scriptures of the truth of this? as that of *Solomon, Jehoram*, &c.

&c. and the Reason is added, they matched either with Idolatrous Women, or into an Idolatrous stock.

3. Such persons that thus match bewray great imperfection many wayes.

1. In that they regard Wealth, Beauty, Friendship or other things of this World, more than they do the favour of God, and the welfare of their own Souls.

2. That there is wanting in such that godly affection to such as are vertuous and godly. *All my delight* (saith *David*) *is in the Saints, and do not I hate them O Lord that hate thee, &c.* Psal. 16. 3. Psal. 139. 21.

3. It is an Argument of little zeal in such, for if it were, it would breed much grief in their hearts to think, my Husband or my Wife is yet the Child of the Devill, and I am yet a member of him or her, that is no member of Christ.

And yet notwithstanding all these Reasons, if such a Marriage be once made it may not be dissolved, for there is no fault at all in the substance of the Marriage, but in the manner of making it. See more of this in *D. Taylor*, on *Titus*, fol. 318.

Secondly, this may serve to warn us all to be very choice of our companions, and to take good heed with whom we familiarly converse and acquaint our selves, for much good or evill is got and procured by the company we use. *David* whom the Holy Ghost commendeth to have been a man after Gods own heart, one that knew well enough what he did, and instructed others to do well, yet living but a while in the Court of King *Abis*, amongst a company of uncircumcised and ungodly *Philistimes*, he was the worse for their company, for there he had learned to lye and dissemble. *use.* 2. 1 Sam. 21

That godly *Joseph* that had withstood and over-come many temptations, and was the very Mirror of the World for his Piety and Holiness of life, yet conversing daily with the ungodly *Egyptians*, whom he heard continually swearing *by the life of Pharaoh*, he

was

was the worse for their evill company, for he learned to swear *by the life of Pharaoh* as they did; *Peter* that had made an Excellent Confession of his Faith in Christ, and had professed much love to Christ, yet even he when he came into *Pilates* Hall where he heard the people on every side railing against Christ, he contrary to his confession before, begun to do as they did, he forsook his Master, yea, and forsware him to.

Now if so great Saints and worthy Pillars in the Church fell in such manner, and were corrupted and made worse by the evil company amongst whom they conversed, what folly is it then in those who presuming of their own strength do boldly converse with all sorts of people, saying, they know well enough what they have to do, and that there is none of them all shall hurt them, &c? Alas poor *Shrub*, when thou seest such *Cedars* fall before thee, trust not too much to thy own knowledge or strength, but if thou hast a godly care to avoid all sin, either in practice or opinion, be carefull to avoid all familiarity with ungodly persons.

But more especially all *Housholders* may learn hereby to be watchfull over their familyes, to keep *Papists*, *Quakers*, *Heretiques*, and all Prophane persons out of their houses, lest they corrupt the rest. Wel knoweth the Devill, that one Instrument of his, one Papist, one Quaker, one Swearer, one Drunkard, one contemner of God and his Word, will do more mischief in a house, than many that are Godly and Religious can do good, these the Devill seeketh to thrust into every family, to be an instrument and a means to corrupt all the rest.

O then how doth it concern all heads of familyes to take good heed that if their houses be cleer of such persons, that they *receive not such to house*, or if any such be crept in amongst them, that with all speed they clense and rid their houses of them.

If

If there come any unto you, and bring not this Doctrine.

BY these words (*this Doctrine*) the Apostle meaneth the *Doctrine* of Jesus Christ, and intendeth to exclude all other *Doctrines* whatsoever that are either contrary to his Doctrine, or not agreeing thereunto.

Herein teaching us,

That none other Doctrine or Religion ought to be received amongst true Christians, but onely the Doctrine of their Lord and Master Jesus Christ, and whatsoever is contrary to his Doctrine, or differeth from it, must be rejected and refused of them. *Doct.* Apostolical Doctrine only to be received.

It is Saint *Pauls* admonition, Though we or an Angel from Heaven Preach unto you otherwise than that which we have Preached unto you, *Let him not be received*, Nay more, *Let him be accursed*. Gal. 1. 8, 9.

And Christ himself commendeth the Church of *Ephesus*, for this, *that she* hated the works (and Wicked Doctrine) *of the Nicholaitans*, a sort of Heretical people, and reproved sharply the Church of *Pergamus* because she tollerated them and the Doctrine of *Balaam* another sort of false Teachers; And he likewise blamed the Church of *Thyatira* for suffering *Jezabel*, one that pretended to be a *Propheteß*, to come in amongst them to teach her false Doctrines, and thereby to seduce and deceive the servants of God; And the Apostle in this place expresly chargeth, *If there come any amongst you, and bring not this Doctrine*, i. e. *the Doctrine of Christ, receive him not.* Rev. 2. 6. 14. 15. 20.

And yet notwithstanding all this some make a Question, whether divers Religions at once may not be tollerated in one Christian Common-Wealth. Nay, as if it were a thing without Question, we see in some Kingdoms, and Countreys, an Hotch-potch of all Religions, both *Jewes*, *Turks*, *Papists*, *Anabaptists* and *Quakers*, *&c.* Friends of Christ and Enemyes to Christ living together, and every one permitted to worship

ſhip his own God, and after his own faſhion, and whatſoever Doctrine a man brings with him he is received; an intolerable tolleration, as appeareth by theſe Reaſons.

1. It is directly forbidden in the Law of God, for it is the firſt of the ten Commandments, *Thou ſhalt have none other Gods beſides me.* Exod. 20.

And our Saviour confirmeth the ſame by ſaying, *Thou ſhalt worſhip the Lord thy God, and him onely ſhalt thou ſerve.* Mat. 4.

And for the practice of this, we find that the Doctrine of Jeſus Chriſt being once planted in *Galatia* might admit no co-partnerſhip with the *Jewiſh* ceremonies, as the obſervation of dayes, and months, and years, circumciſion and ſuch like impotent and beggerly rudiments, as the Apoſtle tearmeth them. Gal. 4. 9, 10.

Yea againſt all thoſe that would mingle all theſe together, Saint *Paul* denounceth an *Anathema*, calling them fools, and plainly telleth them, that by this means they ſhal loſe all benefit by Chriſt, *He ſhall profit them nothing*; and yet thoſe ceremonies and rudiments, which the Apoſtle will by no means have admitted, were all ſuch as were at firſt taught and delivered by *Moſes* that great Saint of the Lord: If then *Moſes* and Chriſt might not ſtand together, how much leſs may *God* and *Dagon*, *Chriſt* and *Belial*, *Light* and *Darkneſs*, *Believers* and *Infidels* live together? Have we not one Lord, one Mediator, one Spirit, one Baptiſm, one Bread to feed on, one Cup to drink on, one Faith, all in Unity? ſo there ſhould not be in the ſame Land and under the ſame Government ſundry Religions, but the multitude of Believers ſhould be of one Heart, and of one mind.

2. We find that the Bleſſing of God hath alwayes been greateſt upon thoſe Princes, Kingdomes, and Churches, and the name and memorial of them is bleſſed, who have utterly baniſhed all Idolatry, Superſtition and falſe worſhip from amongſt them.

Such

they knew to be contrary to Gods word and will, have chosen to dye rather than to forsake the Laws of their God. This answer is full.

But were it not better for a man to fashion himself to the world, and to do as the greatest sort of people do, than otherwise to be hated, mocked, scoffed, and wondred at like an Owl amongst them, called Round-head, Puritan, and I know not what? *Object.* 3.

In matters of indifferency, such as in their own nature are neither good nor evill, it is no offence for a man to fashion himself to the world, and to do as most do; but in any thing that evill is, and forbidden in the *Word* and *Law* of God, although he saw the whole World practising and doing the same, yet must he not fashion himself unto them, nor in any wise be partaker with them therein. *Answ.*

So the Lord expressly chargeth, *Thou shalt not follow a multitude to do evill*, and most fearfully threatneth, *Tribulation and anguish to every Soul that doth evill*, yea, *the wrath of God shall be upon every one that abideth not in all things that are written in the book of the Law to do them*; and is it not better that men should hate us for good, than that God should plague us for evil? Exod. 23. 2. Rom.

And yet against these Scoffs and Taunts of the graceless world, Our Saviour giveth this comfort, *Blessed are ye* (saith He) *when men revile you, persecute you, and say all manner of evill against you*, (call you Round-heads, Puritans, Precise fools, &c.) *for my sake*: i. e. (for doing as I will and command you,) *Rejoyce and be glad*, be not you cast down, nor dishonour God for all this, but rather take comfort in your hearts, *for great is your Reward in Heaven.* Mat. 5. 11. 12.

If therefore the greatest number of people in the World will not walk in the way to Heaven with thee, be thou content to walk thither alone, rather than by partaking with them in their *evill Deeds* to walk with them in the way to Hell for company, remembring that of *Paul*, *If I should please men, I were not the Servant of Christ* Gal. 1. 10.

Jam. 4. *Christ*, and, that *the Amity with the World is Enmity with God.*

Chuse you therefore to live in this World, as *Noah* lived in the old World, or as *Lot* lived in *Sodom*, hated, despised, reviled, and wondred at as an Owl, than ever to be partaker with them in their *evill deeds.*

He that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evill Deed.

FRom these words, some very uncharitably, and quite against the Apostles meaning do collect, and hold, that it is unlawfull for one man to salute another when they meet, with those common tearms of courtesie, *God be with you*, or, *God save you*, or, *God speed you*, or such like.

And see what goodly Arguments they have for this peevish opinion of theirs.

Argu. 1. First, they allege the person whom they meet, may be such a one, that is, of a faith and Religion contrary to that of Jesus Christ; now doth not the Apostle in this place expresly charge, *He that is such a one bid him not God speed?* better it is then to pass by him, saying nothing, than to incur such a danger by saluting him, *as to be partaker of his evill deeds.*

Answ. 1. Consider who they were of whom the Apostle speaketh, they were as before is shewed, notorious and dangerous *Heretiques*, who both broached and obstinately maintained a Doctrine quite contrary to that of Jesus Christ; Now such indeed may not be received of us into our houses, because they refuse to communicate with us in Gods house, and so far forth as our kind saluting of them may be a step to familiar acquaintance with them, we may not so much as salute them, or bid them *God speed.*

2. Consider what she was to whom the Apostle speaketh, though a virtuous *Lady*, yet a weak woman, and one that easily might be seduced by such Seducers as

as they were, whose manner then was, and still is, to creep into the houses of such persons, and to *Lead captive simple women*, as Saint *Paul* observeth. 2 Tim. 3. 6.

But otherwise, though the person we meet be one that doth not believe the Gospel, nor is yet of the household of faith, we must not withstanding courteously salute him: so our Saviour; *When ye come into any house salute the same.* Mat. 10. 12.

3. If the person we meet be a stranger unto us, we knowing no evill by him, in our Christian charity we ought to think the best of him, that he is a professor of the same faith with us, and that as a Christian Brother we ought to salute him.

But though the man we meet be an outward professor of the same faith with us, yet possibly he may be a wicked man, and at that time we meet him he may be going about some vile and sinfull work, it may be to kill or rob another man, shall I now bid this man *God speed*, or say unto him, *God be with you?* *Argu. 2.*

If I knew for certain that he went about any such mischief, and should bid him *God speed*, then were I doubtless a partaker with him of his *evill Deed*: but where I know no such matter by him, by the Law of *Love* and *Charity* that *thinketh no evill*, I must repute him as an honest man, untill the contrary be made manifest against him, for so saith Christ, *Judge not*, and the Apostle, *Charity thinketh not evil.* *Answ.* Mat. 7. 1. 1 Cor. 13. 5.

And our Saviour chargeth his Disciples, *Into whatsoever house ye enter*, though the Inhabitants be strangers, and ye know not what dispositions they be of, yet hoping the best of them, Do ye salute them, saying, *peace be to this house*, And farther telleth them, *If the Son of peace be there, i. e.* if the party whom you salute be a favourer and follower of the Doctrine of Peace, *Your Peace shall rest upon him, if not, it shall turn to you again.*

Yea, admit the man whom we salute is going about an evill action, yet happily our good wish in saying

and saluting him with *God be with you*, may be a means to divert, if not to convert him from his ungodly enterprise: for surely those with whom God is, and whom he directeth with his Spirit can never act any wicked thing.

Argu. 3. But suppose we know him well whom we meet, both what he is, and whereabout he goes, yet in way of common courtesie, suddenly to salute him with those termes, *God speed you*, or *God be with you*, when we think not of God, must needs be the taking of Gods name in vain.

Answ. 1. Whatsoever thou findest by thy self, yet judge not thy brother, that in his Salutations he thinketh not of God, *for what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of a man that is within him?* 1 Cor. 2. 11.

2. Suppose a man thinketh not of God sometimes in his Salutations, when he speaketh of him, shall it therefore be forbidden him and all other persons at all times? Shall not the servants of God salute one another with a kiss of love, and wish all health one unto another, because *Judas* once betrayed his Master with such a kiss and salutation?

3. If all speech of God when we think not of him, be a taking of his Name in vain; then let no Children say their Prayers, nor learn their Catechism, nor read the Scriptures, for in all these things they often speak of God, and yet neither think of him, nor know him, nor understand what they say of him.

4. As for those ordinary speeches which we use upon the way, *God save you, God speed you, the Lord be with you*, we find that they have been usual amongst Gods people in all ages.

Boaz coming into the field amongst his Reapers saluted them, saying, *The Lord be with you*, and they saluted him again, *The Lord bless thee*. And indeed what can we say one unto another more briefly or more sweetly? for if God save us, what can hurt us? If God speed us, what can hinder us? If God bless us, who Ruth 2. 4.

can

can curse? *If God be with us, who can be against us?* Num. 23. 8.

True it is, our devotion is ordinarily more setled, when we pray for our brethren, either publickly in the Congregation, or privately in our Prayers poured forth with knees bended, and hearts and hands lifted up unto the Lord, and yet those short ejaculations upon the way, *God save you, God speed,* or *God be with you,* &c. are not idle Complements, or taking of Gods name in vain, but Christian and commendable duties, both profitable to our brethren, and acceptable to God. Rom. 8. 31.

Which serves for the just reproof of all that wilfully neglect this duty, especially that sort of Cynical people amongst us called *Quakers*, who shew no respect at all to any high nor low, both magistrate and Ministers, yea those of their neareſt relation; but with Mum and no more, like a dumb shew upon a stage, acting the part rather of *Ghosts* than of living men, as if it were a principal part of their Religion to be rude and uncivil, or as if true Religion did quite overthrow Humanity and civil Courtesie. *Vse.*

Verſ. 12.

Although I had many things to write unto you, yet would I not write with paper and ink; But I trust to come unto you, and to speak mouth to mouth, that our joy may be full.

IN these two last verses, we have the third and last part of this Epistle, and that is the *Conclusion*, which consisteth of two parts. The conclusion of the Epist.

1. A Reason why the Apostle is so brief in writing at this time, *Verſ.* 11.
2. A remembrance of the *love* and *commendations*, which this Ladyes Sisters Children did send unto their Aunt, *Verſ.* 12.

Although

Although I had many things to write unto you, yet would I not, &c.

HEre is the *Reason* why the Apostle is so brief in his Epistle at this time, *viz.* because he trusted ere long to come unto them, and to speak with them *mouth* to *mouth*, and then to supply in familiar talk and conference what is now wanting in his writing, and withall he sheweth the *end* why he is so desirous to come unto them, and to talk with them, *viz. that their joy might be full*: *i. e.* that they might have joy in hearing him Preach unto them, and he likewise might have joy in seeing and finding how well and how far they had profited in the Christian Religion.

Where comes first to be observed, the exceeding great care the Apostle had over this *Lady* and her *Children*, both by writing and conference and by all the means he could to farther them in Religion.

Doct. Ministers must be carefull of their flock not onely present, but absent

Whose practice and example is a notable president for all Pastors, teaching them how carefull and diligent they should be in their Ministry; so long as they are present with their flock, and resident upon their charge, they must be faithfull in Preaching the Gospel and word of God unto them, and if at any time absent from them (as the Apostle was at this time) they must be fearfull lest their peoples minds should be carried from the truth, unto any contrary Doctrine, and endeavour to establish them by letters and by writing. This was the end of the Apostles writing so many Epistles to the Churches; after they had planted a Church, and Preached Jesus Christ to a people, to confirm them in the Truth they had taught them, to exhort them to perseverance in the Truth received, as also to forewarn them of *Seducers*, *This know* (saith *Paul*) *that after my departure shall grievous Wolves come in amongst you*, And he gives this in charge, to the *Elders* of the Church of *Ephesus*, *Take heed to your selves, and*

and to the flock over the which the holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the Church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood. And *Paul* gives this in charge to *Timothy*, *To Preach the Word in season and out of season, improve, rebuke, exhort, with all long suffering and Doctrine.* Act. 20. 28. 2 Tim. 4. 2.

The Lord hath ordained the Ministry for this end, and every faithfull and godly Minister doth enter into bond and covenant with God, when he takes that charge upon him, that he will feed the flock of Christ, both by Preaching, Writing, and by being Exemplary to them in a holy life, and not to do this, were to break covenant with God. *Reas.* 1.

Secondly, herein a Minister is to approve his *love* to Christ, as Christ said to *Peter*, *Simon, Simon, lovest thou me? feed my sheep.* 2.

The great danger that will ensue if they neglect their duty, may inforce the necessity thereof upon them, *Their people may dye in their sins, but their blood will God require at their hands.* 3. Ezek. 3.

This serves to condemn the horrible carelesness of many in the Ministry, that having taken upon them the charge of *Pastors*, have no care nor conscience at all to feed or instruct their flock. O that there were not many such amongst us, who feed their sheep in shore pastures; these men may seem to be honest men and good fellows, yet though they should swear they love Christ, the love of Christ is not in them. Hence it comes to pass, that those poor Souls belonging to their charge, like *Pharaohs* kine, are so *lean* and *ill-favoured*, and so weak and feeble, that every bush is ready to intangle them, and every ditch ready to drown them; and every blast of vain doctrine able to blow them away. Art thou a Minister and Embassadour of Christ? Why dost thou not deliver thy Masters message truly and faithfully? How wilt thou at last look him in the face, before whose Tribunal thou must one day stand? *Use* 1.

Secondly, this serves to admonish all Gods Mini-

steirs of their dutyes, *viz.* that they keep a carefull watch over the souls of their people: what other thing doth their several Titles given them in Scripture imply? they are called *Watchmen*, they are called *Seers*. Gods *Trumpeters, the light of the body, &c.* A faithful Minister must be all these to his people, *They watch their Souls as they that must be countable for them*, and look what charge *Ahab* gave concerning *Benhadad*, the same hath every Minister concerning every soul committed unto him, *Keep this man, if he be lost, viz.* by thy default, *thy life shall go for his life*; and look how unfit *blind* and *dumb* men are to be watchmen, so unsufficient Ministers for their places; a sleepy *watchman* careth not to betray a whole City; a fearfull spoyl and destruction must needs befall such a people that have such a Pastor set over them.

Eze. 3. 17. 1 Sam. 9. 9. Esay. 58. 1. Mat. 6. 22. Heb. 13. 17.

And to provoke Ministers to their duty take these Motives.

1. The danger such are in that neglect their duty, such a people *shall dye in their sinns, but the blood will God require at their hands.* Eze. 3.

2 Ministers in doing their duties, herein shall much glorifie God.

3. They save mens Souls, build up the Church, and pull down Sathans Kingdome.

3. And this may be a ground of comfort to such as are faithfull in their Ministry in doing their duty, howsoever the World esteemeth of these, hates, revils and persecutes them, because they testifie their deeds are evill, yet these *are Stars in the right hand of Christ*, they are sure to be kept in Gods right hand, and their master whom they serve, will revenge their wrongs, and become their pay-master, and of him they shall be sure to receive their wages.

Again, we may farther observe, that whereas there were two wayes by which the Apostle taught farther this *Lady* and her *Children* in their godly course, *viz.* by writing and by Preaching unto them; He relyeth other

ather to come unto them and to instruct them by Preaching, and familiar conference with them then by writing. Indeed his writing might be a very good means for the increase of their knowledge, and the establishing of them in the faith of Christ, but for the working and increasing of faith in them, and the stirring up of their affections, which was the thing he aimed at, his Preaching to them, and conference with them was the best, Teaching us,

That all that desire faith, and to grow and increase therein, must be more diligent in hearing the Word Preached, and in conference about the same, than in reading. *Doct.* The word Preached to be preferred before reading.

To read the writings of the *Prophets* and *Apostles*, and other holy men of God, is both a commendable exercise, and a duty necessarily to be performed of all good Christians; It is our Saviours own commandment, *Search the Scriptures*, and his promise, *Blessed is he that reads, and hears, and keeps the Words of this Prophecy*; yet is there more profit many wayes to be gotten by diligent hearing than by reading, for these reasons. Joh. 5. 39. Rev. 1. 3.

1. The hearing of the Word preached, is the ordinary means which God himself hath ordained to beget saving faith in the hearts of the Elect, not reading; So the Apostle, *How shall they believe on him of whom they have not heard, and how shall they hear without a Preacher?* and after this he sets it down for a Rule and Principle, *Faith is by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God*, Again, *By the foolishness of Preaching it pleaseth God to save such as believe*. Hereby the Apostle plainly noteth, that faith is so annexed to the hearing of the Word, that there is no other ordinary means to attain thereunto but this alone; So *Paul, I am not ashamed of the Preaching of the Gospel, because it is the power of God to Salvation to them that believe*; and, *we are born again, not by mortal seed, but by immortal, the Word of God, &c.* Rom. 10. 14. 17. 1 Cor. 1. 21. Rom. 1. 16 1 Pet. 1. 23

God no doubt can, and sometimes doth work faith in the hearts of his Elect without this, but where this means

means is to be had; he doth not, he will not work it otherwise; because this is the ordinary means he hath appointed for it; and for this end God hath given
Eph. 4. 12, 13. unto his Church, *Some to be Apostles, and some Prophets, some Evangelists, some Pastors and Teachers, for the gathering together of the Saints, till we all meet together in the unity of faith.*

Look amongst all the Saints and faithfull people of God in the Scripture, who of them all ever attained the Grace of Faith, whereby they were saved in the end, but by this means of hearing the word Preached? when the Lord converted *Lidia*, first she hears *Paul* preach,
Act. 16. and then the *Lord opened her heart.*

When the Lord appeared to *Paul* in the way to *Damascus*, and spake unto him by a vision from Heaven, he could then and there have instructed him in all things needfull to salvation, and distilled faith in his heart without any more a do, yet would he not, but rather refers him to *Ananias*, he must preach, and *Paul* must hear. In like sort God could have instructed *Cornelius* by the Angel whom he sent unto him, yet would he not, but referred him to *Peter*, He must preach, and *Cornelius* must hear, by which means the Holy Ghost fell on them all that heard the Word, and hereby they obtained Faith and other Graces of Gods Spirit.

2. We find in experience that the word Preached and Heard is more mighty, powerfull, and effectual to work upon the Conscience and affections of men, than the word only Read. There is a certain hidden power in the lively voyce of the Preacher, and that which a man heareth with his ears, peirceth more deeply into his heart, than that which he readeth, *Did not our hearts burn within us* (said the Disciples concerning
Act. 2. 37. Christ) *whilst they talked with us*? And when was there ever a greater conquest made for Christ at a Sermon, than that of *Peter*, where three thousand Souls were converted? The Text said, *When they heard*

these

these things, they were pricked in their hearts; doubtless there is much more good to be gotten and gained by a plain Sermon heard and Preached, than by the most excellent and exquisite Sermon that is read only.

And hence is it that *Regeneration* it self, and all our spiritual Grace that is wrought in us, is ordinarily wrought by the Preaching of the Word, *In Christ Jesus through the Gospel I have begotten you*, and this Word is called *the Word of Faith*, because it begets *Faith*, It is called *the Word of Life*, and the word of *Salvation*, because it brings men to the knowledge of Life and Salvation. 1 Cor. 4. 15.

But what may be the Reasons?

The first may be taken from the nature of the word. It is of a powerfull and peircing nature, *Felix* his heart did tremble whilst *Paul* preached of Righteousness and Judgement to come, and, *Is not my Word as fire, is it not as a hammer that breaketh the stones?* it is called a two edged sword, it cuts both waves; now the word hath not this inherent quality in it self, or power in him that preacheth it, but this is a supernatural power that comes from God, who works thus mightily by this ordinance of his. *Reas.* 1. Jer. 23 29.

Another reason is, because there is nothing in Nature that directs us to the Apprehension of Grace and Glory, *The Natural man perceives not, &c.* And *see-ing the World by its own wisdome knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of Preaching to save such as beleeve.* 2. 1 Cor. 2. 4. 1 Cor. 1. 21.

There is a double knowledge of God, and a twofold way to attain this knowledge.

1. By that *Philosophical* Lecture read by the Creature; this shall leave all men without excuse. Rom. 1. 20
2. By the *Divinity* Lecture read to us in the word, and by this, *He Converteth the Soul, and giveth Light, &c.* and so all the Elect are taught of God.

First, seeing that to speak *mouth to mouth* is to be preferred before writing by our Apostle here, and that it pleaseth *Use.* 1.

pleaseth the Lord (ordinarily) to work all-saving graces by the preaching of the word.

Thus shews the Heinousness of their sin, that any way hinder the passage of the word. It is said that when Zach. 3 1. *Jehoshuah* the Lords high Priest stood before the Lord, *Sathan stood at his right hand to resist him.* It is the main work of *Sathan* to hinder the preaching of the word, and he hath had his Instruments at hand in all times of the Gospel to promote his work in the Church. This was the sin of the *Scribes* and *Pharisees*, that would not *enter into the Kingdome of God themselves, nor suffer those that would.* Thus *Elimas* withstood *Paul*, and thus were the *Prophets* of the Lord dealt withall of old. Thus *Amaziah* dealt with *Amos*, *O thou the* Amos 7. 12. *seer, go thou and flye away into the Land of Judah, and* See Mr. Hall in loc. *there eat thy bread, and Prophesie there, but Prophesy no* 13. *more at Bethel, for it is the Kings Chapel, and it is the Kings Court*; it seems his preaching was such that they were not able to bear it: and thus were other Prophets and servants of God dealt withall, they say to the Micha 2. 6 Prophets, *Prophesy not*, and thus did the Rulers of the Act. 4. 17. *Jewes* forbid *Peter* and *John* to preach any more in the name of Jesus; and such instruments hath Sathan in all places and corners of the Land this day, who make it their work to out and silence faithfull Ministers, though God from Heaven hath shewed many remarkable Judgements upon many such. If the *Preaching of the* Rom. 1. 16 *Gospel be the power of God to Salvation*? then God forbid that ever we should see that day, that *Reading* should be prefled by a *Canon*, and Preaching with a Dr. Boys. *Pot-gun*, as one observes. This were to set *Hagar* in a Chair at the end of the Table, and *Sarah* the Mistress of the family to wait that while.

2. Secondly, this serves for *Instruction*, to let us see what price such a people ought to put upon a godly and faithfull Ministry where God hath pleased to send it. This is to be esteemed as the greatest blessing that God can bestow or they enjoy.

So

So our Saviour to the Woman that said unto him, *Blessed is the Womb that bare thee, and the Paps that gave thee suck, Yea rather* (said he) *Blessed are they that hear the Word of God and keep it.*

And to his Disciples he said, *Blessed are your eyes, for they see, and your ears, for they hear.*

Now the price and worth of this blessing may be known and conceived,

1. By the want whereof: for where the preaching of the Word is wanting, there are men *without Christ*, Eph. 2. 12. *i.e.* without any spiritual good thing, for Christ is the fountain of all our good, the door and gate by which we enter into the possession and fruition of all the blessings of this life or that which is to come, without Christ men are but usurpers, for right they have none at all unto them.

2. They are *Aliens from the Commonwealth of Israel*, *i.e.* they are no members of the *Church* and *Family* of God, and therefore are in danger of eternal destruction: for as all that were out of *Noahs Ark* were drowned in the end, so all that are not the Israel of God, and are out of the Church, must needs perish.

3. *They are strangers from the Covenant of Promise*, *i.e.* the gratious promises of Salvation and Eternal Life do no way belong unto them.

4. *They are without hope*, i. e. without all grounded hope that ever their sins shall be pardoned, or that their Souls shall be saved at that great day of the Lord.

5. *They are without God in the World*, *i. e.* they have in them no knowledge of God, no fear of God, they regard him not, reverence him not as they ought to do. And on the other side, God knows not them, loves not them, regards not them, but suffers them to run on, and live, and lye and dye, and perish in their sins of ignorance. O the woefull and miserable condition of those people that want the benefit of the Preaching of the Gospel amongst them! these sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, till the light of the Gospel be risen up amongst them.

And

3. And last of all, this makes for the *Reproof* of those lazie people who are loath to take so much pains as to come to *hear* a Sermon; but chuse rather to sit at home than to repair to the house of God, to hear him here speaking unto them. Certainly, it is the Devil that worketh strongly in these men, for well he knoweth, that the *Gospel Preached* is *the power of God to Salvation*, and that the ordinary means to beget saving Faith is the hearing thereof; whereupon the Devil useth all means possible to keep men from repairing to the House of God, fearing lest if they should repair thither they should be caught in the Net of the Gospel. And if at any time these men come, either he lulls them a sleep, or sets them on talking or gazing, that they profit not. But howsoever it be, it were to be wished that all that have ears to hear, and legs to carry them, would hear.

Rom. 1. 16.

Aug. Confes.

If any come to catch and carp at the Preacher as too many do, yet let them come, for happily whilst they think to catch the Preacher, he may catch them, as *Ambrose* did *Austin*; or if any man have a mind to sleep, yet let him come, for it may be as (*Latimer* said,) Almighty God will take him napping: but let all men know that the blessing of Faith here, and Salvation hereafter, is promised and annexed to *Hearing* more than to *Reading*.

I trust to come unto you, and to speak mouth to mouth, that our joy may be full.

AS the Apostle here professeth that he had a desire to come to the House of this *Lady*, there familiarly *mouth to mouth* to confer and talk with *her* and her *children*, so he sheweth also the *end* why he was so desirous to come amongst them, *viz. that their joy might be full*, they might have joy in hearing him Preach unto them, and he might have joy in them, by seeing and finding how far they had proceeded, and how well they had profited in the Faith and Religion of Jesus Christ.

There

There is a twofold observation to be made of this.

First, that it should be a joy to the peoples hearts to be in the company, and to hear the voyce of their Pastors, yea the *very feet of him* that brings unto them the *tydings of Peace* should be beautifull in their eyes. Thus were the people of *Galatia* affected towards *Paul* their Pastor, they received him as an Angel of God, and such was the love they bare unto him, that if need had been, they would have pluckt out their own eyes to have bestowed upon him. Even wicked *Herod* as bad as he was, was glad and did rejoyce to be in the company, and to hear the voyce of *John* Baptist his Preacher, when the Jaylor came to be converted, how cruel soever he was before to *Paul* and *Sylas*, yet now he washeth their stripes, and sets meat before them, and rejoyced in their Ministry and presence. What entertainment gave *Zacheus* to Christ? he entertained him most joyfully into his House. This love shewed the *Sunamitish* widow to the *Prophet*, and *Lydia* to *Paul*, so great is the affection of a faithfull Pastor, and a godly people each to other. *Doct. 1.* Pastors presence should be the joy of the people. Esay. 52. 1. Gal. 4. 14. 15. Mark 6. Luke 19.

This serves for the reproof of those who cannot away with the company of their Pastors and Ministers of all other men, but if at any time they light into his company, they are so far from conceiving any joy therein, as that they think the time long, untill he be parted from them, or they from him. *Vse.*

But wretched and miserable is their condition that band themselves against their faithfull Pastors, as in many places many do at this day, who make it their work by all means possible to stop their mouths, and out them, thereby not only depriving themselves, but many hundred poor Souls of the bread of life; sad will be the account that such men are one day to make unto God.

Secondly, we may farther observe, what should be the joy and comfort of every Godly and Faithfull Pastor, *viz.* this, to see his flock, and the people committed *Doct. 2.* The peoples proficiency, the Pastors joy.

mitted to his charge, to grow in the knowledge of God, and to profit more and more, both in the knowledge of Christian Religion, and in the practice of the same.

This *David* professeth of himself, I was glad when they said, *Come let us go up to the house of the Lord, our feet shall stand in thy gates O Jerusalem*; and it is said of him, that when he saw the people offer so willingly unto the Lord with a perfect heart, *then David the King also rejoyced with great joy*, and such was *Pauls* love to the *Romans*, that he protested, *that he longed to see them, that he might bestow some spiritual gift upon them*, so *Paul*, when he saw how the *Philippians* had profited by his labours amongst them, and how they walked in the wayes of the Lord, he calleth them *his joy and his Crown*, and beseecheth them *to fulfill his joy by being like minded, by loving one another*; and certain it is, that it is the want of love to the flock, which is the cause of the Pastors wilfull absence from the flock, and he that loveth not his flock, loveth not him whose flock it is.

Psal. 122. 1.

1 Chron. 29. 9.

Rom. 1. 11

Phil. 4 1.

use. 1. This maketh against those careless Ministers, who look not after the flock, but after the fleeces only, and care not what becomes of the poor souls of their Sheep, whether they sink or swim, be saved or damned, go to God or the Devill, so that they may have their *Tythes* well paid amongst them, though the people go all down to Hell in the end, for their ignorance and sinfulness of life, it is no grief to their hearts; if God have wrought in any of them a desire to look after the means of Salvation, and to thrive in knowledge and godliness, this is so far from them to be a joy to see, as that they mock at them, hate and revile them, and rather discourage such, than any way farther them in a godly course. But alass, when they have fleeced their flocks, and gathered store of wealth together, what shall all this profit them in that dreadfull day, when on the one side the multitude of poor souls that dyed in their sins, shall flye as it were in the faces of those careless Ministers, and cry out against them, *Are not you the cause of our*

Destruction

Such were *David*, *Jehosaphat*, *Hezechiah*, *Josiah*, and others. Of *Iehosaphat* it is storied, that he was one *that lift up his heart unto the wayes of the Lord, and he took away the high places, and the groves out of Judah*; And it is there shewed, *that the Lord was with Iehosaphat*, and *the Lord stablished the Kingdome in his hand*, and, *he had Riches and Honour in abundance*. And the like is reported to the high commendation of *Hezechiah*, that, *he took away the high places, and brake the Images, and cut down the Groves, and brake in pieces the brazen Serpent that Moses had made, for unto those dayes the Children of Israel burnt Incense unto it*. And mark what followed, *So the Lord was with him, and he prospered in all things which he took in hand*. 2 Chro. 17 6. 3. 5. 2 Reg 18. 4. vers. 7.

And the like we may read of good King *Josiah*, and of Gods great favour towards him, in the Chapter before; and the Church of *Ephesus* is highly commended for this, that she could not indure those that were evil to root in her. 2 Reg 23 Rev. 2. 2.

And on the contrary, such as were otherwise good, and Religious Kings are much blemished, and blamed in Scripture for this, that they did not labour to banish Idolatry, and Superstition out of their Dominions, as they ought to have done; Such a one was King *Asa*, of whom it is said, that his heart was upright with the Lord all his dayes, but this is recorded as his sin, *He put not down the high places*, but permitted those that would, to commit Idolatry in his Land.

3. A mixture in Religion threatneth Ruine to that Church and Common-wealth wherein it is tollerated, for it causeth a distraction in mens affections, and prepareth mens hearts to tumults and massacres, as lamentable experience hath often taught us. *A Kingdome* (saith Christ,) or a Church, *divided against it self cannot stand*. *Sheep* and *Wolves* possibly may abide together for a time, but it is not likely they will long agree together, but the *Wolves* will set upon the *Sheep* and worry them if they can. Let *Germany* with the Ana- Mat. 12. 25.

baptists, and *Munster*, and *New England*, tell us what confusion both *Anabaptists* and *Quakers* brought in amongst them, &c.

And now to return again to the Doctrine, that Apostolical Doctrine is only to be received, *If any bring not this Doctrine*, &c. the Doctrine of the *Prophets*, *Apostles* and which *Christ* himself taught, is the only way to Life and Salvation, never any attained Salvation by any other way or means; the Primitive Believers by Faith in the *Messiah* to come, we under the Gospel in the same *Messiah* being come; they under the Law looked upon their Sacrifices of *Lambs*, *Kids* and *Goats* that they killed and offered in Sacrifice, but as *Types* of Christ, it was Christs blood that they put confidence in, this is cleer throughout all the Epistle to the *Hebrews*, that the blood of *Lambs* and *Goats* could never purge away sin, but only by faith in the *Messiah*, *which was yesterday, to day, and the same for ever, the Lamb slain from the beginning*.

Now this doth not exclude the Doctrine of the Prophets, for the Doctrine of the Prophets is the same, only changed into Apostolical Doctrine, *Ye have a sure word of Prophecie, whereunto ye do well to take heed*; for the Doctrine of the Prophets in the Old Testament doth consent and agree with the Doctrine of the Apostles in the New. *Search the Scriptures, for in them, &c.* And 'tis said of *Paul*, *He perswaded the Iewes concerning Iesus, out of Moses and the Prophets*, (mark that,) *from morning till evening*; and this we have before made appear by comparing Scripture with Scripture, places in the Old Testament with places in the New.

2 Pet. 1. 19.

Ioh. 5. 39.

But for the farther proof of this point, that Apostolical Doctrine is onely to be believed, and received of every true Christian, Consult these Texts, *Pauls* saying to King *Agrippa*, *O King Agrippa believest thou the Prophets? I know thou believest them*, and *Paul* gives testimony of his own Faith thus, *After the same way which they call Heresie, so worship I the God of my Father*,

Act. 26. 27.

Act. 24. 14

thers, believing all things that are written in the Law and the Prophets.

And that Apostolical Doctrine is fit to be the foundation of our Faith, it may farther be proved thus.

1. By the *Antiquity* of it; it was the first Doctrine taught, even in Paradise, after the fall, *the seed of the Woman shall bruise the Serpents head*; It was the first Doctrine taught after Christ was manifested in the flesh, witness *Christ* himself and all his *Apostles*. Gen. 3. 15.

2. In regard of the *Authority* of it; this Doctrine is certain and infallibly true, *It is a sure word of Prophecy*; and not only so, but it is above all witnesses that can be brought, It is the supreme and highest judge, for saith Christ, *I receive not my witness from men, I have a greater testimony than that of John, the Scriptures do testifie of me*; and the Scriptures have authority from God, and therefore infallible, *Heaven and Earth shall pass away, but not one jot or tittle of the Word shall fall to the ground.* 2 Pet. 1. 9. Joh. 5. 34. 1 Pet. 1. 24

3. Because of the *Sufficiency* of it, containing expressly or by reduction whatsoever is necessary to Salvation: for it was the office of the *Apostles* to reveal the whole counsel of God, and to keep back nothing that was profitable for the Church; and therefore the Apostle calls God to witness, that he had kept back nothing from them, but had delivered the whole counsel of God unto them. Act. 20. 27.

And it was their office not only to Preach but also to Register the Word, and it was the end why the Scriptures were penned, *that we might be wise to Salvation, these things were written that ye might believe, and believing might have eternal life.* 2 Tim. 3. 15. Joh. 20. 31.

4. It appears that Apostolical Doctrine only is to be relied upon for life and Salvation, by the *Canonizing* of it, *For I testifie unto every man that heareth the words of this Prophecy, if any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the Plagues written in this book, And if any man shall take away from the words of the book* Rev. 22. 18.

of this Prophecy, God will take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy City, and from the things written in this book.

use. 1. This lets us see how unreasonable that demand of the Papists, Quakers, and the like is, who seek and labour to obtain a tolleration of their Idolatrous and dangerous Religion, and *Phanatical wayes* of worship, in this common-wealth, a thing neither lawfull for them to require, nor for a Christian magistrate to grant.

Shall the very motion of the Protestant Religion, at *Rome*, or *Spain*, or other Popish Countreys, be counted such a crime, that they will in no wise suffer, albeit it is cleerly proved to be the Religion that is Apostolical and the onely means to life and salvation; and ye should we grant a *tolleration* to their Religion which we know to be manifest Idolatry and Superstition, yea such as we know hold forth such damnable tenents destructive to a christian Church and common wealth, flatly against the Word of God, as the Quakers maintain? Surely it is a shameless thing for the one to ask that which themselves will not grant, and for the other that are spued out of *New England*, and all Countreys where they come, to think they may be tolerated in a Christian state.

2. Secondly, if our Magistrates should permit a tolleration unto them freely to profess and teach their Religion, how should they ever be able to answer for it to the great God of Heaven to whom the *Kings* and *Gods* of the earth must one day make an account, who expressly chargeth them to avoid all such, and in no sort to receive or suffer them?

It were therefore to be wished, that all Kings and Governours would follow the Example, and practice of good King *Josiah*, who assembled all *Judah*, and caused, yea compelled all his people to hear the Word of the Lord, and to stand to that Religion, which the book of God made known unto them; And if any came and brought not this Doctrine, they should not receive them.

Secondly,

Secondly, if this be so, that *Apostolical* Doctrine be only to be received as the ground of faith, This lets us see the difference between the Protestant Religion, and that of the Papists, Quakers, &c. The Papist he grounds his Faith upon the Testimony of the Church; but we ground our Faith upon the Doctrine of the Apostles. Now the Authority of the Scriptures is above the Authority of the Church; for the Authority of the Church is built upon it; the Scripture gives authority to the Church, the Church cannot give authority to the Scriptures.

The first we prove by our Adversaryes own confession, for being asked how they know the Church erreth not, they allege this place of Scripture, *Loe I am with you unto the end of the World*; yea, the *Jesuit* himself confesseth, that nothing is more certain than Scripture; then what reason have we so to depend upon the judgment of the Church? the Church is indeed called, the *Piller of Truth*, because built on the *Truth*, and a keeper of the Truth. Mat. 28. 20.

Again, if the Scriptures depend upon the approbation of the Church, it must necessarily follow that the promises of life and Salvation contained in the Scriptures do so likewise; but 'tis absurd to think that the promises of God do stand upon the allowance of men.

But how can we know the Doctrine of the *Apostles* to be the Word of God but by the Testimony of the Church? *Object.* 1.

Indeed the Testimony of the Church doth first incline us to think that it is the word of God, and makes us willing to hear and read it, but afterwards by reading and hearing, we attain to further certainty and assurance, for God himself speaketh unto us in the writings of the Apostles, *He spake by the mouth of his holy Prophets which have been since the World began*, and that so evidently and cleerly, that the faithfull undoubtedly are assured that it is his Word; and this is promised, *Answ.* Luk 1 70 Heb 1.11. Cant. 2.8.

Esay 52.6 *they shall know in that day, I am he that doth speak*, And
Ioh. 7. 17. again, *If any man will do his will, he shall know the Doctrine, whether it be of God*; and if it were not so, the case of the Church were worse than when the Lord spake by *Visions* and *dreams*, for they without testimony from men were fully assured.

Object. 2. But the Doctrines of the *Apostles* are obscure, as *Peter* saith of *Pauls* Epistles, and the sense of them cannot
Answ. be understood but by the Church. It is true, to the natural man they are so, but in themselves they are clear, to those whose eyes God hath opened, *The en-*
2 Cor. 2. Psal. 119. 130. *trance of the word giveth light*, God hath promised to teach all the Elect whatsoever is necessary to Salvation.

3. Thirdly, if *Apostolical* Doctrine be to be received as the only ground of faith, then that Doctrine that is not built upon this foundation is unwarrantable, and not to be received, It wanteth *Cæsars stamp*, and to be rejected, yea, though an Angel from Heaven should preach it, though multitudes did believe it, and seem to have many reasons to confirm it, yet we are to reject
Col. 2. it, as the Doctrine of Devils, will worship, that hath a shew of Devotion and humility, but no warrant at all from the word; as amongst the Papists

Eph. 2. 8. 1. The Doctrine of free-will, even in the first act of conversion, quite contrary to Apostolical Doctrine

2. The Doctrine of Merit, contrary to Apostolical doctrine, for that teacheth us that our Salvation is of
Eph. 2. meer grace, *By grace ye are saved.*

3. The Doctrine of Universal Redemption, that Christ did intend his *Death* for all, shed his blood for all. A Doctrine contrary to *Apostolical* Doctrine, *I lay down my life for my sheep.*

4. The Doctrine of falling away from Grace is contrary to *Apostolical* Doctrine, *if ye doe these things ye shall never fall.*

So amongst the Quakers.

1. Their

1. Their disowning the *publick Ministry* as no Ministry of Jesus Christ, albeit God hath set his Seal thereunto in the conversion of many souls.

2. In their dis-owning the *Ordinances* of Christ, and his Gospel, the *Word* Preached by his Ministers, *Baptism*, the *Supper of the Lord*, Church-order, *Prayer*, *Singing of Psalms*, all which are dis-owned and laid aside by these men.

3. Their doctrine of sinless perfection.

4. Their denying civil honour and respect due to men.

5. Denying the Scriptures to be the word of God, counted a dead letter, and perversly wrested by these men.

6. Their denying to swear though called thereunto by a Lawfull magistrate.

7. Pretending immediately to be taught of God, with many more such gross and absurd opinions of theirs, quite contrary to *this Doctrine*, that is, *Apostolical Doctrine*; utterly to be abandoned and rejected of all good Christians.

Fourthly, this lets us see that there is nothing more sure and certain in the World, than the faith of a Christian. All Arts and Sciences are grounded on Truth, that we call the truth of a Creature, created Truth; but the faith of a Christian is grounded upon the Doctrine of the Apostles, and *uncreated Truth*. And hence is it, that there is nothing more sure and certain in the world than the faith of a Christian. Sense and Reason may deceive, *Faith* cannot, because grounded on uncreated truth; and therefore in a holy reverence we may say, whilst we hope according to thy word, Lord if we be deceived in the hope of glory, thou hast deceived us, and thy word hath deceived us, which the *Quakers* cannot say who lay aside *this Doctrine*, and rest upon a *Light* within, and a *Spirit* within, contrary to the Doctrine of Jesus Christ revealed in his Word. 4.

5. Fifthly, this may serve for direction to the builders in the house of God, the Ministers of Christ, how they should build, *viz.* that their Doctrine they teach, be such as is grounded upon *Apostolical Doctrine, to the*
Esay 8.20 *Law and to the Testimonies: and if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.* We must conform our selves and our Doctrine to the Doctrine of the Apostles, and deliver nothing for truth, which is not directly or by just consequence proved thereby; this is that Rule, that both Teachers
2 Pet. 1. 9. and Hearers must keep unto; *We have a sure word of Prophecy whereto ye do well to take heed.*

Vers. 11.

For he that biddeth him God speed, is partaker of his Evill Deed.

THis is the Reason of the Apostles former *Exhortation*

And the meaning is, that whosoever he is that familiarly saluteth and keepeth company with such a one as maintaineth any Doctrine contrary to the faith and Religion of Jesus Christ, seemeth thereby to be a companion with him in the evill he doth.

Certainly this man offendeth two wayes.

1. In his *Deed.*
2. By the *Scandal* he giveth to others.

1. By his *Deed*: for thereby he incourageth the Wicked, when he seeth him to be had in regard with those whom he goeth about to subvert and deceive.

2. By the *Scandal* and offence he giveth thereby unto others: for when he doth not avoid all familiarity with such kind of people, it is a grief to the godly to see it, and it is supposed by them, and others, that he favoureth them in their corrupt opinions.

Doct. The Doctrine is,

We must That it is not onely unlawfull for a godly Christian

to

to do any thing that is evill himself, but he must not any way be partaker with others in the evill they do; this is unlawfull for him. This is cleer by many Testimonies, *Have no fellowship with the unfruitfull works of darkness, but rather reprove them. A companion of fools shall be destroyed. I will not sit with the Wicked,* (saith *David,*) and what followeth, *I will wash my hands in innocency, and so will I compass thine Altar, q. d.* If I should sit and converse with lewd men, I could not be innocent and free from their sin; and in this did *Jeremy* take much comfort, that *he had not sat in the Assembly of the Wicked*; And of the Wicked *Paul* gives this in charge to the Churches, *Keep not company with him, that he may be ashamed.* If godly Christians would shun the company of these, certainly, it would make them ashamed of their wayes.

not be partakers in other mens sins. Eph. 5. 11. Prov. 13. 20. Psal. 26. 5, 6. Ier. 15. 17. 2 Thes. 3. 14.

Now for the farther cleering of this Truth, that we must not be partakers with others in the evill they do, I shall shew that men may be partakers of other mens sins three manner of wayes.

1. In their *Hearts.*
2. In their *Words.*
3. In their *Deeds.*

How many wayes we partake of other mens sinns.

1. A man may be said to partake of another mans sin in his *Heart*, divers wayes.

I. In his heart.

1. When though he neither commit the evill himself, nor approve of the evill that is done or committed by another, yet he mourns not in his heart at the doing thereof, to see how much God is dishonoured, and how greatly the sinner hath indangered his own Soul thereby.

As for example, a man upon the Sabbath day walking in the street, or seeing any other exercising themselves in open prophaness upon that day, either in publick or private houses, gazing upon them, and silently suffering them without reproof, not troubled nor grieved in *Heart* at their evill deeds, he is in some sort partaker with them in their evill Deed: for this the Apostle

1 Cor. 5. 2. Apostle blames the Church of *Corinth*, when they saw the *incestuous person*, whom they knew had committed that foul sin, yet they did not *sorrow*, nor were *grieved* for his sin. A contrary example whereof we have in Psal. 119. 136. *David*, who was otherwise affected, *My eyes* (saith he) *gush out with water, because men keep not thy Law*; and not to do this is to make our selves in some sort guilty of those evil deeds.

2. When though a man neither doth, nor saith any evill himself, yet secretly in his heart approveth and alloweth of that evill, which he seeth to be done by another: so *Saul*, though he threw never a *Stone* at *Stephen*, nor spake one word against him that we read of, yet because he sat down, and kept their cloaths that stoned him, and in his heart approved of this evill deed which he saw others do, he is for this said to be a partaker of that evill deed, and to be guilty of *Stephens* Death.

In like manner the common sort of the *Jewes*, though they laid no hands at all upon our Saviour Christ, nor spake any thing against him, yet, inasmuch as in their hearts they did like, allow, and approve of that which they saw others do against him, Saint *Peter* tells them that they were partakers of their evill deeds, yea in Act. 2. plain terms, *Ye are they which have killed the Lord of Life.*

3. When by connivence and silence or indulgence, a man lets that pass without any reproof or punishment, which by his office or authority he should labour to reform and amend.

Thus offendeth

1. Ministers. 1. The *Minister*, who is a partaker of the evill deeds of the people, when seeing their sins and errors they daily fall into, over whom God hath set him, he holds his peace, lets them alone, and doth not reprove them. It is the Lords own charge to every Minister, *Son of man, I have made thee a watchman to the house of Israel, therefore hear the word of my mouth, and give them warning*

ning from me. When I ſhall ſay to the wicked, thou ſhalt ſurely dye, and thou giveſt them not warning, nor ſpeakeſt to admoniſh the wicked of their wicked wayes, that he may live, the ſame wicked man ſhall dye in his iniquity, but his blood will I require at thy hand. Eze. 3. 17.

O the heavy burthen of the Miniſtry ! I would to God that all Miniſters that go under the name of Preachers of the Word, that their trumpet would give a more certain ſound, and apply themſelves more roundly to reprove thoſe ſins, ſo much abounding in this age. If we do but conſider the prodigious ſigns and wonders God hath now ſo lately ſhewed us in the Heavens, in the Earth, and in the Seas ; If we conſider again what worthy young men in the Miniſtry God hath raiſed up in all parts and corners of this Land, which now begin to be ſet aſide, as if there were nō farther uſe to be made of them ; and withall what an inroad of all manner of ſin and open prophaneneſs is crept in amongſt us, and how *Sects* and *Hereſies* get ground in this Nation ; what godly Soul cannot but lay theſe things to heart, and look upon them as ſad *Omens*, that God hath a controverſie with this Land, and that theſe are fore-runners of ſome approaching judgement ?

2. In this ſort alſo offendeth the *Magiſtrate*, and is partaker of the evil deeds of the people, *Conniventia*, when ſeeing the evils of the people, he winketh at them, and will not ſee, or forbeareth to inflict ſuch puniſhment as the Law requireth, whereby others are the more imboldned in their ſins.

Hemingius reporteth, that there being one Arraigned before a Judge, a Villain that had ſlain ſeven men, the Judge grew very angry, and thought with himſelf what Torment he might inflict upon ſo vile a Malefactor; one that ſat by ſtood up, and ſeemed to plead in the behalf of the Priſoner, that he had murthered no more but one man, as for the other ſix, they were all murthered by the *Judge*; the *Judge* wondring to hear himſelf *Hemingius in loc.*

himself accused in this manner, the other told him, that if he had cut off that *Malefactor* according to the Law, for the first murther he committed, then had the other six slain been alive; wittily implying thereby, that the *Magistrate* who winketh at the evill deeds of those that are under his authority, or doth not punish them according to Law, thereby becommeth a partaker of their evil.

3. In like manner offend those fond *Parents*, and are partakers of the evill deeds of their Children, *Indulgentia*, who when they see them doing any thing that evil is, do yet suffer them to run on therein, not once lifting up their hands to correct them, nor so much as once opening their lips to reprove them for it.

Heming. in loc. The aforesaid *Heming.* repeateth a notable story to this purpose.

There was (saith he,) a Rich woman that had but one onely Son, whom she made such a *fondling* and *wanton*, that he might never be corrected or reproved for any thing that he did; This youth afterwards falling to Riotiousnes played the *Thief*, and for that fact going to the Gallows, by the way he spied his *Mother*, and making as though he would say somewhat to her in her ear, he got her by the nose, and with his teeth bit it off from her face, and then spitting it out of his mouth to the ground, he said with a loud voyce, Let my mother (O people) take this from me as a reward for the care she had in bringing me up.

But above all, let all fond Parents set before them
1 Sam. 2. the fearfull example of *Old Eli*, recorded in the book of God, who though he were himself a man of an honest and godly life, yet for that he was too fond of his Children, and did not roundly reprove and correct them for their evill deeds, as he should have done, he was severely punished by the hand of God as a partaker of their *evil Deeds*.

2 Secondly, in *Words*, a man may be partaker with a-
In words. nother of his *evil Deed*, even by his *words*, and that five wayes.

1. When

1. When he giveth Counsel to another to do any thing that evill is. Thus was *David* a partaker with *Joab* with his *evill Deed* in the *Murther* of *Vriah*, because he laid the Plot how it might be done; And thus was *Herodias* partaker with her Daughter in the Murther of *John* Baptist, because she gave her Counsel to beg his head of the King. 1. *Consilio.* 2 Sam. 11. 15.

2. When by his *Authority* he commandeth another to do that which is not lawfull for him to do. Thus was *Herod* also a partaker in that evill deed of the Murther of *John Baptist*, when by his Regal Authority he sent the Hangman, and gave charge that *Johns head* should be brought in unto him. 2. *Authoritate.*

3. When one man wittingly provoketh another to do any thing that evill is; as when one man urgeth another to drink more than he is willing, or may suffice nature, though himself drink not with him; or when one gives occasion to another to be angry, though he be not angry himself. Thus had *Jobs* wife been partaker with her Husband of that evill deed in blaspheming God, if she had perswaded him thereunto, as she would have done, howsoever her self blasphemed him not. 3. *Invitatione.*

4. When a man takes upon him to defend, justifie, and maintain the evill deeds of others. Thus are some Lawyers partakers of the evill deeds of their *Clyents*, who for their Fee, will speak good of *evill*, justifying the wicked, and plead hard in their *Clyents* behalf, be his cause never so unhoneſt and unjust: but though by this means they gain the Worlds wealth, yet lose their own Souls; these get the Worlds favour, but Gods Curse. For, *Wo unto you Lawyers*, saith Christ, *Wo unto you that speak good of evil.* 4. *Defensione.* Luk. 11. 46. Esay 5. 20.

5. When one man praiseth, applaudeth any other in evill, as if he did well therein. This are all glozing and fair-tongu'd flatterers, partakers of the *evill deeds* of those whom they sooth up in their sins; against whom a Curse is gone out from God, *Wo unto them that sow pillows under all arm-holes.* 5. *Laudes.* Eze. 13. 18

Thirdly,

3. Thirdly, one man may be partaker with another in
In Deed. his evil by his own deed, and that divers wayes.

1. When though he be no party in the *Deed* doing, yet hath he his part and share in the deed done. Thus have many in these plundring times shared in the goods of honest people, which goods so got, experience hath taught us, God hath blowed upon, that it hath not prospered.

2. When a man familiarly converseth with such as are noted, and known to be evil doers, wicked and ungodly, erronious in their judgments, as *Papists*, *Anabaptists*, or *Quakers*, and by his intire acquaintance with them, seemeth to countenance them.

This is that the Apostle in this place especially aimeth at and condemneth, *He that biddeth such a one God speed, is partaker of his evill deed.*

Now in all these wayes one man may be partaker with another of his evill, and therefore a Christian must take heed that he partake not therein in any of these wayes, neither in *Heart*, *Word*, nor *Deed*, but that we
2 Thes. 3. 6. *withdraw our selves*, (as the Apostle warneth) *from every Brother that walketh inordinately, and have no fellowship*
Eph. 5. 11. (any kind of wayes) *with the unfruitfull works of darkness.*

Quest. 1. What? at no time, in no case, upon no occasion, may it be lawfull for a man to be a partaker of the evil *Deeds* of others? Put the case;

If the *Popish Mass* were restored again, and every man charged by *Authority* of the Prince to be present thereat, or else to lose both his goods & his life too, may it not be lawfull for me, that am a *Protestant*, for the safety of my life and *estate*, to repair unto the Popish Church to hear their Mass, and to do as they do, and with my outward body to be a partaker with them in that *evill deed*, so long as I reserve my heart to the Lord, and in my heart do hate and abhor that Idolatry?

Answ. Let a man take heed how he flattereth his own Soul in this case: but know,

1. That

1. That the Lord requireth as well the outward service and worship of the body, as the inward obedience of thine heart. So the Apostle, *Glorifie God in your bodyes and in your spirits, for they both are Gods.* 1 Cor. 6. 20.

It doth not then satisfie and content the *Lord* that thou reserve thine heart for him, and with thy body be a partaker with Idolaters in their *evill Deeds*, but as God hath made both thy body and Soul, so he looks that all the honour and divine worship that they both do give, should be given wholly to him.

Take the like case, suppose a man should find his wife in bed with another man, and she to excuse the matter, and to pacifie her Husband tells him, that howsoever she gave another man power over her body, yet no man had her heart but her Husband onely, Will her Husband alow of this as a good and lawfull excuse? No more will the Lord, that jealous God, alow thee with thy body to be present at a Mass, and there too to bow down and worship that Idol, & breaden God, or any way to be a partaker in that *evill Deed*, though thou tell him a thousand times that thy heart is his alone.

Those only have praise of God, and are commended for his true and faithfull servants, who have not so much as bowed their knees unto *Baal*, howsoever they lived daily amongst those persons, and in those places, where that *Idol* was by the commandment of the Prince daily bowed unto and worshiped.

2. The hearts belief and the mouths Confession must go together. This is cleer, *with the mouth man confesseth to Salvation*, and whosoever saith, that with his heart he believeth in the Lord Jesus Christ, yet either with his mouth or by any outward gesture of his body, doth deny him, Christ Jesus tells him, that he will also one day deny him before his father which is in Heaven. Rom. 10. 10.

And farther, we may read that the Servants of God were marked in their foreheads, to signifie that in what

what place soever, or in what company so ever the
came, they never dissembled their Religion, but th
World might see in their faces, by their outward g
sture and behaviour, that they were Christians indee
and the Servants of the Lord.

So then, dost thou live as *Abraham* did, amongst t
Canaanites, Idolatrous people, or as *Lot* amongst the S
domites, a beastly and unclean people, or as the godly
Pergamus, even where Sathans Throne is, and whe
thou seest nothing but evil dayly committed on
sides? yet be not thou by any means a partaker w
them in their *evill deeds*; though they threaten to co
ficate thy goods, yea to take away thy life, remem
bring alwayes the saying of our blessed Saviour, *If*
Mat. 10. 39. *man hateth not his Father and Mother, and Wife, a*
Children, and Brethren and Sisters, yea and his own l
also, he cannot be my Disciple; But on the contrary, *H*
that loseth his life for my sake shall find it.

Object. 2. But have we not the examples of the Prophet
Christ and his Apostles, who howsoever in their tim
the found all things most corrupt, and the people mis
rably given to superstition, yet we read not that they d
therefore separate and divide themselves from the
Assemblies. Christ himself repaired ordinarily to t
Temple of the *Jewes*, and taught therein, *Peter* a
Act. *John* went thither to pray with them, yea no man c
shew that any of them did ever refuse to be partake
ever with the *Iewes* of their Prayers, Sacrifices, Sacr
ments and Ceremonyes of *Moses* Law.

Answ. To this it is answered by that Learned Doctor, a
blessed Martyr *D. Ridley*, you should prove saith
that any of these did in the Temple communicate wi
the people in any kind of worship forbidden by t
Law of God, or repugnant to the word; as for t
Church saith he, I am not angry with it, I refuse n
to pray with the People, nor to hear the word of G
therein.------But all the Saints which truly fear G
when they have been provoked to do any thing whi
the

Destruction and Damnation? and on the other side, God himself shall rise up against them, and require the blood of all those poor Souls at their hands?

Secondly, seeing every faithfull Minister and Godly Pastor of a flock makes this his work, to see his people profit in knowledge, and grow daily in Grace and Godliness, and that this is the matter of his joy and rejoycing; What a sad thing then is it, that their people should not see this, and be perswaded of the good love and affection of their Ministers towards them; and answer the same by the like love and affection from them again? 2.

Sathans Policy doth never appear more than in this, to divide between Minister and people, and to estrange the hearts and affections of each towards other. Never was his malice more seen than at this day; where is that faithfull Minister in City or Countrey where Sathan hath not his Instruments at work to disquiet, molest, and out their Godly, Faithfull, and painfull Pastors, who labour after nothing more than the good of their Souls? Sathan knows right well, that where there is no affection to the person, there will be no regard to the Preaching. *Ahab* despising *Eliah* and *Micaiah*, despised that word they spake, which if he had hearkned unto had turned to his welfare. 1 Reg. 21. 19. 22. 8.

Whosoever (*for their works sake*) receive not a faithfull Minister into the inward closet of their Souls, and whosoever in the departure of such, mourn not after them, as King *Joash* after *Eliah*, *My Father*, *my Father*, may well be questioned of the true work of Grace in him.

That our joy may be full.

IT is not against the Religion of Jesus Christ, for a man that is a professor thereof, at sometimes to rejoyce and to be glad. *To all things there is an appointed time,---a time to weep, and a time to laugh, a time to rejoyce,* *Doct.* Christians ought mutually to

rejoyce one with another.

joyce, &c. and where Saint *James* saith, *Is any merry?* it doth import that it is no offence to be *merry* at some times; for indeed, without joy and mirth at some times, our life is no life; for mirth is even the life of life. And hence it is that the Prophet wills the faithfull, *Sing O Daughter of Sion, shout O Israel, be glad and rejoyce with all thy heart, O Daughter of Jerusalem.* Thus Christ willeth his Disciples to rejoyce, upon this ground, *That their names are written in the book of life.* And in that Psalm which was penned to *give instruction*; The righteous are called upon to this duty, *Be glad in the Lord, and rejoyce ye Righteous, and shout for joy all ye that are upright in heart*; and this duty is often prissed by the Apostles themselves, *Rejoyce evermore.* In all estates, adverse, or prosperous, in what condition soever God is pleased to cast us in, the precept runs, *Rejoyce in the Lord always, again, I say Rejoyce*; he doubles the *mandate*, to shew the necessity of the duty. Thus the wise Merchant that had found the good *Pearl*, *he went away rejoycing*; yea so appropriate is this affection of *joy* to the child of God, that it is reckoned to be one of the fruits of the Spirit of God in them, *The fruit of the Spirit is joy.*

Zeph. 3. 14.

Luk. 10. 20.

Psal. 32. 11

1 Thes. 5. 16.

Gal. 5. 22.

Difference between the joy of the wicked and the godly.

So then to *rejoyce* and be *glad* at some time is a thing common to all the godly as well as the wicked, but great difference is there betwixt the joy of the one and the other, the one rejoyceth in *vanity*, the godly rejoyce in *verity*. First,

I. In the matter.

The rejoycing of the wicked, is either in the hurt of other, or in the vain and transitory riches and pleasures of this world. This they rejoyce in, as their only portion, *Father give me my portion.*

Luke 15

Herein they rejoyce, & this is all they shall have, *Son, remember that thou in thy life time receivedst thy pleasure.*

Luke 16.

Whereas the godly men rejoyce in the favour of God towards them more than in their *Corn* and *Wine* and *Oyl*, that God is a reconciled God unto them in Jesus Christ, and they at peace with him, that their nat-

names are written in the book of life, and they joy in the hope of glory hereafter.

Secondly, in regard of the *manner* of their joy. 2. In the manner.

The wicked are never merry or rejoyce, but it is in a brutish manner, in drinking, ranting, or such swinish mirth, or singing of lewd and filthy Songs, or dancing may-poling, &c.

Whereas the godly when they are merry and rejoyce, it is in a sober manner, without offence unto others; and they express it either in singing of Psalms, *Is any merry? let him sing Psalms*, or else in some harmless recreation void of offence. Iam. 5. 13

Thirdly, in regard of the *end* of their joy. 3. In the end.

The end of a wicked mans mirth and jollity is sorrow; so *Solomon* speaking of the jollity of the wicked, saith, *The end of that mirth is heavineſs*, either here for a time, or hereafter for ever; and so saith Christ, *Wo be to you that now laugh, i. e.* you that now rejoyce, and take such pleasure in the sinfull pleasures of this world, *for you shall one day weep and howl.* So *Solomon*, *Rejoyce O young man in thy youth, and let thy heart be merry in thy young dayes.---But know, that for all theſe things* (in the end) *God will bring thee to Judgment*, and when that day comes, one hours torment in Hell will cause a sinner to forget all his sweet pleasures on earth.

Whereas on the contrary, the end of a godly mans joy shall be joy here, and joy for ever hereafter. So our Saviour, *Your joy shall no man take from you*; they shall have fulness of joy here, even the joy of the holy Ghost, and fulness of joy at Gods right hand hereafter, when God shall say unto them, *Come ye Bleſſed, receive the Kingdome prepared for you from the beginning of the World, come enter into the joy of your Lord.* Mat. 25. 34.

Hereby is refelled that fond opinion of many, who think that Religion doth dull the wits, and daunt the spirits of a man, and to be once a professor, is to bid adiew to all joy and comfort. And why so? because they take not pleasure in vanity and sin as before. *Use.* 1.

the joy of a wicked man is but as the crackling of thorns under a pot, soon in, and soon out, a painted joy in comparison of the joy of the Righteous; as Christ said, *I have meat to eat that yee wot not of*, So may the godly say, They have joy that the world wots not of; yea, in their greatest sorrows the godly want not cause of joy, *Light is sown for the Righteous, and joy for the upright in heart*; the time of the godly mans sorrows are but his seed time, for after darkness they shall see light, and they shall rejoyce, *And their joy shall no man take away from them.*

It is a great fault even amongst Christians, that too often they darken the glory of Religion, by their uncomfortable walking. The spyes that went into *Canaan* disheartned the people touching that good Land. Let not Heaven, nor the Master whom we serve, nor the Religion which we profess, be so served by us. What though thou art pestered with many infirmities, meetest with many crosses and losses in the world, yea, if both Earth and Hell should conspire together to make thee miserable, yet as long as thou hast God for thy *Father*, Christ for thy *Redeemer*, and the *Spirit* to support thee, Enemies, Tyrants, Death, Devils, cannot make thee miserable. *Paul* and *Silas* sung in Prison, and many of the Martyrs rejoyced in flames, their inward joy carried them through all.

2. Let then the consideration of these things work in us a loathing of the vain and perishing pleasures and joys of this world, and a longing after that fulness of joy, which the Saints of God do reap both here in this world, and for ever hereafter; and if such joy be found in a Christian course here, what joy hereafter? if on Earth, what in Heaven? if the seed-time be so joyous, what will the harvest be? if the wilderness yield this comfort, what will *Canaan* yield? If it be such joy for this blessed Apostle to meet with this *Lady* and her *Children*, and to have Communion with them on Earth, what joy will it be to meet with the Congregation

tion of the first born in the Kingdome of Heaven, where we shall be ever with the Lord?

Vers. 12.

The Children of thine Elect Sister greet thee.

IN these words we have a *Remembrance* of the love and kind commendations, which this Ladyes Sisters Children send unto their *Aunt*, and herewith the Apostle concludeth.

Hence it may appear, that this virtuous and religious *Lady* had also a virtuous and religious Sister who were both of them by God Elected to Eternal life; and as this Lady so her Sisters Children were trained up in their tender years in the knowledge of God and of his Son Jesus Christ.

Now amongst these it should seem the Apostle Saint *John* was at the time of the writing of this Epistle, and by him they remember their duty and humble commendations to the Lady their *Aunt*.

The Sons of thine Elect Sister greet thee.

This is the *conclusion* (in a manner) of all the Apostolical Epistles, for in the winding up of them the Apostles and the faithfull in the places where they were, send their loving Salutations and Greetings to other their faithfull brethren, living in other places, to whom those Epistles were directed, as we find in, *Rom.* 16. 1 *Cor.* 16. 2 *Cor.* 13. *Phil.* 4. 4. *Col.* 4. *Tit.* 3. *Heb.* 13. *Philmon, &c.*

Thereby to signifie how they embrace each other, with all Christian and loving Affection, and that they were not out of mind of each other, though they were out of sight.

Doct. Salutations both by word of mouth, and writing, commendable.

Whence we observe,

That *Salutations* and *Greetings* both by word of mouth and by writing, are commendable and to be used of all good Christians. What better authority to shew the necessity of this duty, than Christs own commandment,

Mat. 10. mand? *When ye come into any house salute the same*; and lest any should take this to be a duty to be performed to friends only, and to such as are of their way, and to none others, Christ teacheth it to be a duty to others, Mat. 5. 47. *If ye be friendly to your Brethren only? What singular thing do ye? do not even the Publicans the same?* It is *singular things*, that Christ requires at their hands which others do not, as in the former verse, *If ye love* 46 *them which love you, what reward shall you have? do not the Publicans the same?* Doth not the Apostle almost spend a whole Chapter in *Salutations* to the Saints? Rom. 16. which he would never have done, if it had been unlawfull, as the practice of the *Quakers* would have it, to salute one another; what means the Apostle when 1 Tim. 3. he saith, *Greet ye one another with an holy kiss*, or as 26. Saint *Peter* hath it, *Greet ye one another with a kiss of* 1 Pet. 5. *love*? where observe, how that civil curtesie of kissing 14. each other when they meet, used amongst Christians of the East Countreys, in antient times, is called *a holy kiss*, or a *kiss of love*, because thereby they testified their mutual love and kindness each to other. An excellent example hereof we have in *Boaz*, who coming amongst his Reapers and Workmen, said thus unto them, *The* Ruth 2. 4. *Lord be with you*, and they again answer him thus, *The Lord bless thee.*

Indeed this Custome of Saluting and Greeting one another both by word and writing, hath been alwaies and still is in use in the world, even amongst the very Heathen, and other Prophane persons, that have no whit of Religion in them at all, as well as amongst the godly and faithfull; yet there is a great difference between the Salutations of the one and the other.

1. The *Salutations* of carnal men are most what but a little court holy water from the teeth outward; whereas the Salutations and good wishes of the godly are hearty and unfeigned.

2 The Salutations of carnal men are meerly civil, and wishes of corporal health and prosperity, without any regard to their spiritual welfare. Whereas

Whereas the salutations and wishes of the godly, are more than civil, for they wish not only outward prosperity, so far as it may be for their good; but more than so, as they themselves have tasted and seen how sweet the Lord is, so do they feelingly and heartily in their salutations, wish their brethren might also partake of the same.

But for all this that hath been said, that proves the necessity of this duty, Our dumb *Quakers* have this to say for themselves.

Did not the Prophet *Elisha* when he sent his servant *Gehazi* to the Sunamites house, give him this charge, That if he met any man, *Salute him not, and if any man saluted him, not to answer him again*? And did not our Saviour gives this in charge to his Disciples, *Salute no man by the way*? *Object.* 2 Reg. 4. 29. Luk 10.4.

What reasonable people in the world would hence conclude the meaning either of the *Prophet* or that of our Saviour to forbid all men, at all times, not to salute one another? or not rather to understand them thus, to forbear their common curtesie so far forth as it might be a hindrance to the performance of their charge and duty they went about; so that the meaning of the Prophet and our Saviour himself, implies no more than this, Rather than you shall any way hinder the quick dispatch of the business laid upon you, speak not to any man you meet withall by the way. *Answ.*

Now what is this to our *Quakers*? must they be so intent upon their business of going to the *Ale-house*, as many of them daily do, as that going in the streets they may shew no respect to high nor low, Magistrate or Minister; but rather *Beast-like* than Christian-like to pass by them with *Mum* and no more?

But as many of their tricks and toyes are laid aside, as their frantick fomings, shakings, and Quakings, and many of that gange in many Countreys and places, have that dumb Devill cast out of them, that now they use more civility than formerly, so it would add much

much to their credit that this *dumb Devill* amongst those *Quakers* with us were cast out likewise.

Now the reasons why Christians should shew such curtesie and humanity to others are these.

Reas. 1. First, whatsoever thing is of good report, and seemly, that must we think upon and do, So the Apostle warneth us, *Brethren, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just,---whatsoever things are worthy love, whatsoever things are of a good report, if there be any vertue, think on these things,---and these things do.*

But such a thing is our Saluting and Greeting one of another, a thing honest, and of good report, and worthy praise, Whereas on the contrary, if we pass by one on the way, and salute him not, it is adjudged generally as an uncivil, and an unseemly part in any; but chiefly, for one that is a professor of the faith of Christ to shew himself hoggish or inhumane in his carriage and behaviour is a thing very disgracefull to his profession.

2. Secondly, if one man salute not another when he meeteth with him, it is not only reputed a thing uncivil, but more, it is accompted as a sign of hatred, and malice lurking in his heart; for so it is noted of *Absolum*, that he hated *Ammon* his brother; and whereby did this appear? when they met, *Absolon* said unto his brother *Ammon neither good nor bad.*

3. Thirdly, by this outward token, we testifie the inward love of our hearts; and shew what earnest desire we have each of others good and welfare.

4. Fourthly, hereby the godly are the more incouraged and comforted when they find that they have the hearts, the commendations, the good words and good wishes of them that fear God: for though others of the wicked of the world do envy, reproach, and disgrace them, yet is it a great comfort to the heart of a Godly man when he finds that he hath the blessing and good wishes, and prayers of the godly, and that such esteem well of them.

Yea more, this point of curtesie and humanity in saluting

luting and greeting one another is of all Christians to be practised and performed, not only towards those who are our friends, and wish well unto us, but even towards those also that are our Enemyes, that out of their rancor and malice will not salute us, nor so much as speak to us when we meet them; So our Saviour, *If you salute your Brethren only, what singular thing do ye?* Mat. 5. 47. whereby our Saviour intendeth, that whereas the worst and most irreligious sort of people, will be willing to salute, imbrace, and shew all tokens of love to their friends, such as profess religion and faith in Christ must doe more, even wish all good to those that are our enemyes, that out of hatred will not speak to us again; as faith and love, so good conscience, and good manners in a Christian must not be separate, but walk together.

Let us apply this.

This shews that the *Quakers* Doctrine and practice of life is in this not *Apostolical*. This duty was taught and practised by the faithfull before there was any Quaker heard of in the world. What Nation is there in the world, (yea the very *Turks* and *Barbarous* Heathen themselves not excepted,) *That have but only the light of Nature* (so much pleaded and stood upon by these men,) but give civil honour to their Superiours, and shew some Tokens of Love and respect to all? only these men that plead so much *to follow the Light within* are of such a *Beast-like* Nature as to deny this Civility and Humanity to others. Did they consult the Scriptures where so many excellent *Precepts* and *Examples* are recorded, they would be ashamed of their Brutish and Swinish behaviour; these are possessed with a *dumb Spirit* which had need to be cast out by fasting and Prayer. *use.* 1.

But what shall we say to those men that are quite fallen off from Christianity, overthrow all the Ordinances of Jesus Christ, the Ministry, the Ordinances of the Gospel, Word, Sacrament, Prayer, singing of Psalms?

are

are not all these laid aside, and vilified by these men? and not only so, but they are also fallen off from common Humanity, that they are next to *brute-beasts* rather than men, much less Christians.

2. Such also come within the compass of this reproof, that have the name of Christians, but have the hearts of Devils, for those that are Christians indeed obey the Commandment of Christ their Master, and live according to the Rule of his Religion: Now his Commandment and Rule is this, that we be friendly to those that are unfriendly to us, and kindly salute those by word and writing, that either have wronged us, or when we salute or speak to them, will not salute or speak to us again.

3. Secondly, this serveth farther for our *Instruction*, and to confirm unto us that the custome of saluting one another, which is in use amongst us, when we write, or meet upon the way, is both lawfull and commendable.

And yet we must know that this duty is not necessarily required, to be performed, and practised of all persons, at all times, and towards all sorts of people, without any exception, for,

1. If the person whom we meet, or to whom we write, be either a Drunkard, or a Swearer, or an Adulterous person, or that lyeth in any other gross sin, and such a one as howsoever he hath been told and warned thereof, doth still run on in his wicked course, and hateth to be reformed, In this case, this mans Superiour, whether the Magistrate, his Master, or his Parent, may well forbear to salute or speak to such a one as he is, thereby the better to correct him, yet so as that this strangeness proceed not from any hatred to his person, but only to the sins of the man.

1 Sam. 14. 24. Thus did *David* the Father banish *Absolon* his wicked Son from his Court and presence, so that he would not so much as see him, nor speak unto him, yet not for any want of love unto him, but only the better to chastice him for his sin.

2. If

2. If the perſon whom we meet, or to whom we write, be known unto us to be a ſworn and profeſſed Enemy of Gods truth, and of his Church, we may not imbrace or ſalute ſuch a one. This is cleer, *He that is ſuch a one bid him not God ſpeed*, and yet if a man be no open Enemy to God, but only a private enemy to thy ſelf, thou muſt ſalute him.

Now theſe caſes onely excepted, it is the duty of us all, as we deſire to approve our ſelves true Chriſtians, to ſhew our ſelves friendly to all, and kindly to ſalute both by word and writing, not thoſe alone whom we know or imagine do love us, but even thoſe alſo that do hate us, and are profeſſed enemyes unto us.

True it is, this goeth much againſt the hair to do thus, but we Chriſtians muſt be lead not by the ſway of our own unruly affections, but by the Rules of Reaſon, and Religion. So the Apoſtle, *They that are Chriſts have Crucified the fleſh with the affections and luſts.* Gal. 5. 24.

Thus let us do, and without flattery and diſſembling, even from a Religious and honeſt heart, let us ſalute as before, and wiſh well to all.

Then ſhall we find in the end to our eternal comfort, that when that day ſhall come in which our Lord and Maſter Jeſus Chriſt and we ſhall together meet in the ayr, he will then kindly ſalute and curteouſly entertain us, claſp us in his armes, and welcome us unto him, ſaying, Welcome my good and faithfull ſervant, come now and enter into your Maſters joy.

Laus Deo.

1623

1823

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